YALE:

A Contesseration of Human Beings

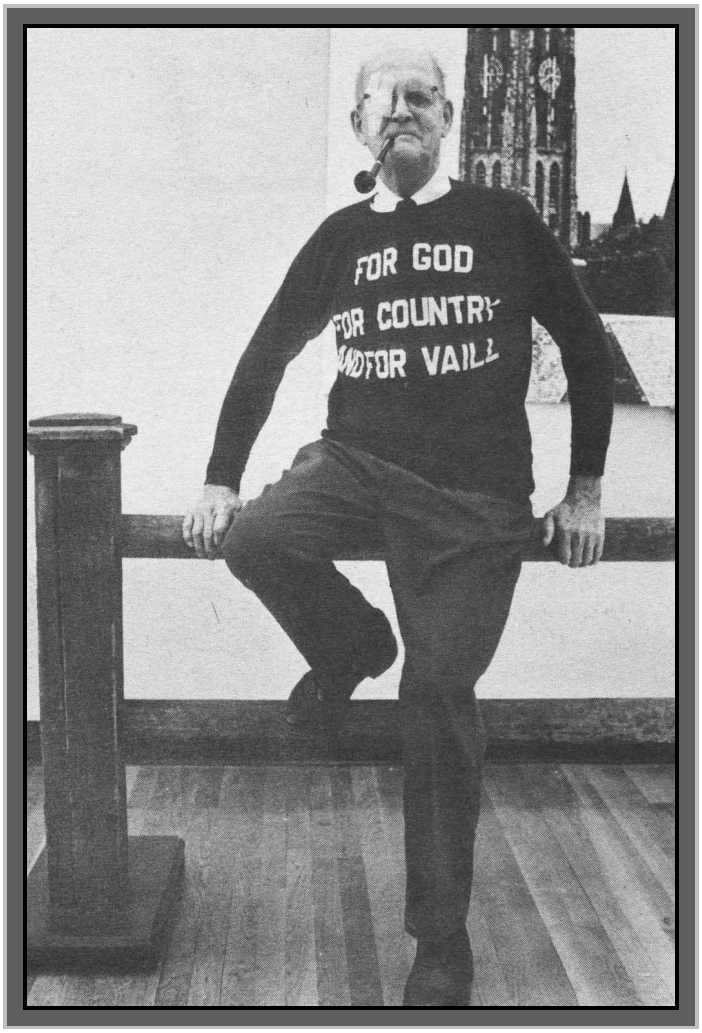
A Collation
of Inconsequential Tales
Encumbered With
A Few Personal Notes

by

George D. Vaill

A Few Words of Introduction

I met George Vaill shortly after I began working at Yale University in September 1968. At the time he was serving as associate secretary at the University, but his connections with Yale were deep and wide-ranging. George graduated with the Class of 1935, and between 1937 and his retirement in 1972 he served his alma mater in various capacities. He was an author, humorist and knowledgeable historian whose specialty was the University he loved. Upon his death in 1986 at the age of 75, Henry (Sam) Chauncey, the last University secretary that George served, said of him, "in many ways, (he) *was* Yale. He was the guardian of her history, creator of her ceremonies and keeper of her sense of humor."



George Vaill "encased in threads given to (him)
by the graduating Seniors of 1976
at their Class Day Exercises."

George loved language and was a clever writer. In 1978, he drew national attention by winning the limerick contest held by Connecticut's Mohegan Community College with the following entry:

The bustard's an exquisite fowl
With minimal reason to growl;
He escapes what would be
Illegitimacy
By grace of a fortunate vowel.

George's third book, *Yale: A Contesseration of Human Beings,* was privately published in 1979. This diminutive paperback contains some of his favorite Yale tales. The following year he presented me with an autographed copy, which I have cherished ever since. In this delightful book George recounts the humorous and sometimes all-too-human side of Yale's leaders, skillfully told with affection and wit.

About the same time as the book was published, George proposed me for membership at Mory's, Yale's storied private club and traditional haunt of the Whiffenpoofs, the renowned all-male singing group. When I took George to lunch there in gratitude for having been accepted as a member, he told me a story that curiously does not appear in his collection of Yale anecdotes. If for no other reason than to keep the story alive, I shall try to reconstruct it for you.

Mory's, reputedly founded in 1849, has for many decades been located on York Street in the onetime home of Wilbur Cross, Dean of Yale's Graduate School from 1916 to 1930, and after his retirement from Yale, Governor of Connecticut from 1931 to 1939.

At some point, Mory's management decided to renovate one of the smaller rooms on the second floor of the clubhouse for private meetings and to name it in honor of Wilbur Cross (it is now called the Governor's Room). After the renovations were completed, a dinner and dedication ceremony was held. The honored guest of the evening was Wilbur Cross's elderly son, the sole surviving member of the immediate family.

Mory's on York Street, about 1914
The Wilbur Cross ("Governor's") room is on the second floor, on the right side

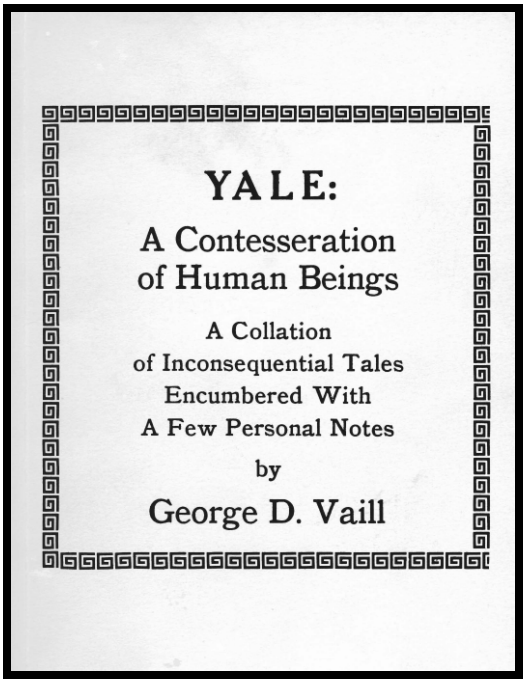
When dinner was finished, Governor Cross's son stood to acknowledge his gratitude for Mory's having thus honored his family and to offer some personal recollections of having grown up in the house. As he continued, he remarked upon the unique appropriateness that this particular room had been chosen to be named after his father, as it was in this room, during the family's tenure in the house, that his father had spent a considerable amount of time. The members' ears perked up as the Governor's son, with a twinkle in his eye, disclosed that the room in question had been the maid's room! Predictably, hilarious uproar followed.

George's book is in scarce supply these days, the occasional copy appearing infrequently in book-finders' inventories. Motivated by a desire to keep his memory alive and to share these charming stories with a select few people who might appreciate them, I have transcribed the book and added a few illustrations of the people and places mentioned in the text. I hope that George would have approved, and I trust that you will find that more than a few of these anecdotes will bring a smile to your face.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyam, 1859

Joseph F. Dzeda
November 2012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FOREWORD

"Yale: A Contesseration of Human Beings" was originally the title of a lecture which I delivered at the Eighteenth Annual Yale Alumni Seminar in May of 1974. It has since been used to confuse and mystify alumni audiences in Tulsa, Milwaukee, Atlanta, New York, Stamford, Bristol, New Haven, and several other locations, including a number of reunions and class dinners. This presentation of the chief substance of those lectures may serve, at the very least, to reduce my travel time and mileage – and give me more leisure for those sinful pursuits which illuminate and tranquilize my declining years.

"Contesseration?" Before you run to your dictionary, be advised that you probably won't find this fourteen-letter word there unless you happen to have that edition of Webster's which is dated 1859 – one year before the start of Noah Porter's 32-year term as the dictionary's editor. (Some recent unabridged editions carry the word in an obscure footnote.) It is defined as "A friendly or harmonious union." Its etymological ancestor is the Latin *contesseratio,* meaning friendship, which in turn is compounded of *con* and *tessera,* a square block or token between friends. I suggest that Yale, over the years, has been peopled by human beings who have constituted a friendly and, for the most part, harmonious union. (It might be said that we have also had our quota of square blocks.) Those of you who purchased the book just to find out what the word means may now return it to the bookstore and try to get a refund.

The work consists mainly of anecdotes about well-known Yale personalities, with miscellaneous bits of history and comments on the Yale scene. For those personal notes and recollections which have been allowed to creep in, no apology is offered. You have to take the bad with the good.

Some of the stories will be familiar to you. It is hoped that you will not be unduly irritated if your favorite anecdotes are omitted – or are told the wrong way. No attempt has been made to differentiate between the verified tale and the apocryphal, since opinions in this thicket are numerous – and sometimes belligerent.

The Oxford Universal Dictionary assigns 1620 as the date when *contesseration* first appeared. If the scripture here spread before you does not guarantee its perpetuation as a household word through another 360 years, no one will be surprised.

G. D. V.

Bethany, Connecticut
March 1979

Some of these pieces have appeared, in one form or another, in the Yale Alumni Magazine & Journal *or the* Yale Weekly Bulletin & Calendar, *which have graciously given permission for their republication.*

A PARTIAL
Cast of Characters

Malcolm Pratt Aldrich
B. A. 1922
Yale Medal 1973

James Rowland Angell
LL.D. 1921
President of the University (1921-1937)

Edward Wight Bakke
Ph. D. 1932
Sterling Professor of Economics (1945-1971)

Lucius Beebe
Member of the Classes of 1925 and 1926

William Beebe
B. A. 1873, M. A. (Hon.) 1899
Professor of Mathematics and Instructor in Astronomy (1898-1917)

Henry Augustin Beers
B. A. 1869, M. A. (Hon.) 1887
Professor of English Literature (1880-1916)

Anne May Rodgers Berdan
Wife of John Milton Berdan

John Milton Berdan
B. A. 1896, Ph. D. 1899
Emily Sanford Professor of English Literature (1927-1941)

Thomas Goddard Bergin
B. A. 1925, Ph. D. 1929
Sterling Professor of Romance Languages (1957-1973)
Master of Timothy Dwight College (1953-1968)
Yale Medal 1975

Archibald Henry Blount
Lord of the Manor of Orleton

Kingman Brewster, Jr.
B. A. 1941, M. A. (Hon.) 1960, LL. D. 1977
President of the University (1963-1977)

LeBaron Russell Briggs
LL. D. 1917
Dean of Harvard College
President of Radcliffe College

William Jennings Bryan
Democratic Candidate for President of the United States
(1896, 1900, 1908)

Norman Sydney Buck
B. A. 1913, Ph. D. 1922, LL. D. 1962
Dean of the Freshman Year (1938-1954)
Master of Branford College (1943-1959)
Provost of the University (1958-1961)
Yale Medal 1962

Henry Chauncey, Jr.
B. A. 1957, M. A. (Hon.) 1971
Secretary of the University (1971-1981)

Howell Cheney
B. A. 1892, M. A. 1909
Fellow of the Corporation (1913-1938)

Ebenezer Cleaveland
B. A. 1748 (granted in 1775), M. A. 1775

Wilbur Lucius Cross
B. A. 1885, Ph. D. 1889, Litt. D. 1930
Dean of the Graduate School (1916-1930)
Sterling Professor of English (1922-1930)
Governor of Connecticut (1931-1953)

Frederick Trubee Davison
B. A. 1918, M. A. (Hon.) 1931
Fellow of the Corporation (1931-1953)

Clarence Day
B. A. 1896, M. A. (Hon.) 1926

George Parmly Day
B. A. 1897, M. A. (Hon.) 1910
Treasurer of the University (1910-1942)
Yale Medal 1952

Jeremiah Day
B. A. 1795, M. A. 1798
President of Yale College (1817-1846)
Fellow of the Corporation (1846-1867)

Chauncey Mitchell Depew
B. A. 1856, LL. D. 1887
Fellow of the Corporation (1888-1906)
United States Senator (1898-1911)

William Clyde DeVane
B. A. 1920, Ph. D. 1926
Dean of Yale College (1938-1963)
Emily Sanford Professor of English Literature (1944-1965)

Franklin Bowditch Dexter
B. A. 1861, M. A. 1864, Litt. D. 1902
Secretary of the Corporation (1869-1899)
Assistant Librarian (1869-1912)

Henry Strong Durand
B. A. 1881

Jane Wakeman Skinner Dwight
Wife of Timothy Dwight [2]

Timothy Dwight [1]
B. A. 1769, M. A. 1772
President of Yale College (1795-1817)

Timothy Dwight [2]
B. A. 1849, M. A. 1852, D. D. 1886
President of the University (1886-1899)

Dwight David Eisenhower
LL. D. 1948
President of the United States

Joseph Roy Ellis
M. A. 1908
Instructor in English (1919-1920)
Registrar of Freshmen (1920-1934)

Henry Farnam
M. A. (Hon.) 1871

Henry Walcott Farnam
B. A. 1874, M. A. 1876, LL. D. 1923
Professor of Political Economy (1880-1912)
Professor of Economics (1912-1918)

Gerald Rudolph Ford
LL. B. 1941, LL. D. 1977
President of the United States

Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi
Prime Minister of India

Angelo Bartlett Giamatti
B. A. 1960, Ph. D. 1964
President of the University (1978-1986)

Liebig Wallis Gibbons
Ph. B. 1902
Longtime Manager of the Yale Co-Op

Alfred Whitney Griswold
B. A. 1929, Ph. D. 1933
President of the University (1950-1963)

Mary Brooks Griswold
Wife of Alfred Whitney Griswold

Arthur Twining Hadley
B. A. 1876, M. A. (Hon.) 1887, LL. D. 1899
President of the University (1899-1921)

Rutherford Birchard Hayes
LL. D. 1880
President of the United States

Frederick Charles Hewitt
B. A. 1858

Reuben Andrus Holden
B. A. 1940, M. A. 1948, Ph. D. 1951, L. H. D. 1971
Secretary of the University (1953-1971)
Yale Medal 1976

Herbert Clark Hoover
LL. D. 1918
President of the United States

John Edgar Hoover
Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

William Studebaker Innis
B. A. 1914

Frederic Blair Johnson
B. A. 1896, M. A. (Hon.) 1919
Bursar of the University (1913-1942)
General Manager, University Service Bureaus (1917-1942)

Frederick Scheetz Jones
B. A. 1884, M. A. 1896
Dean of Yale College (1909-1927)

Sherman Kent
Ph. B. 1926, Ph. D. 1933
Professor of History (1947-1954)

His Majesty Kigeri V
King of Rwanda-Urundi

Augustus Canfield Ledyard
B. A. 1898

Charlton Miner Lewis
B. A. 1886, Ph. D. 1898
Emily Sanford Professor of English Literature ((1899-1923)

Carl Albert Lohmann
B. A. 1910, M. A. (Hon.) 1926, L. H. D. 1953
Secretary of the University (1927-1953)

Clarence Whittlesey Mendell
B. A. 1904, M. A. 1905, Ph. D. 1910, LL. D. 1953
Director of Athletics (1919-1925, 1940, 1953-54)
Dean of Yale College (1926-1937)
Master of Branford College (1931-1943)
Sterling Professor of Latin Language and Literature (1947-1952)
Yale Medal 1953

Elizabeth Lawrence Mendell (Tibby)
Ph. D. 1939
Wife of Clarence Whittlesey Mendell

Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister of India

George Henry Nettleton
B. A. 1896, Ph. D. 1900
Lampson Professor of English (1934-1943)
Dean of Yale College (1937-1939)

Bernadotte Perrin
B. A. 1869, Ph. D. 1873
Lampson Professor of Greek Literature and History (1902-1909)

Annabel Hubbard Phelps
Wife of William Lyon Phelps

William Lyon Phelps
B. A. 1887, Ph. D. 1891, LL. D. 1934
Lampson Professor of English Literature (1901-1933)

Abraham Pierson
Rector of the Collegiate School of Connecticut (1701-1707)

George Wilson Pierson
B. A. 1926, Ph. D. 1933
Larned Professor of History (1946-1973)
Historian of the University
Yale Medal 1975

Cole Albert Porter
B. A. 1913, L. H. D. 1960

Noah Porter
B. A. 1831, M. A. 1834
President of Yale College (1871-1886)

Carl Purington Rollins
M. A. (Hon.) 1920, L. H. D. 1949
Printer to the University (1919-1948)

Delmar Barney Roos
Photographer and Engineer

Henry Thompson Rowell
B. A. 1926, Ph. D. 1933
Assistant Professor of Latin (1935-1940)

Charles Seymour
B. A. 1908, Ph. D. 1911, LL. D. 1950
President of the University (1937-1950)
Yale Medal 1952

Gladys Watkins Seymour
Wife of Charles Seymour

Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill
B. A. 1911, D. D. 1929, LL. D. 1960
Fellow of the Corporation (1934-1959)
Yale Medal 1960

Elliott Dunlap Smith
M. A. (Hon.) 1928
Master of Saybrook College (1931-1946)

Ezra Stiles
B. A. 1746, M. A. 1749
President of Yale College (1778-1795)

Carlos French Stoddard, Jr.
B. A. 1926
Executive Secretary, University Council (1964-1973)
Director of Endowment and Gifts Reports (1964-1973)

Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes
B. A. 1896, M. A. (Hon.) 1900, LL. D. 1921
Secretary of the University (1899-1921)
Yale Medal 1952

Alphonso Taft
B. A. 1833, M. A. 1836, LL. D. 1867
Fellow of the Corporation (1872-1882)
Secretary of War, Attorney-General
Minister to Austria and to Russia

Robert Alphonso Taft
B. A. 1910, M. A. (Hon.) 1936
Fellow of the Corporation (1936-1953)
United States Senator (1939-1953)

William Howard Taft
B. A. 1878, LL. D. 1893
Kent Professor of Law and Professor of Constitutional Law (1913-1921)
Fellow of the Corporation (1906-1913, 1922-1925)
President of the United States
Chief Justice of the United States

Charles Henry Taylor, Jr.
B. A. 1950, M. A. 1952, Ph. D. 1955
Professor of English (1965-1976)
Provost of the University (1964-1974)

Samuel Jones Tilden
B. A. 1837 (granted in 1875), LL. D. 1875
Governor of New York (1875-1877)
Democratic Candidate for President of the United States (1876)

Chauncey Brewster Tinker
B. A. 1899, M. A. 1901, Ph. D. 1902, Litt. D. 1946
Sterling Professor of English (1924-1945)
Yale Medal 1955

Rev. Henry Hallam Tweedy
B. A. 1891, M. A. (Hon.) 1909
Professor of Practical Theology (1909-1937)

Dudley Landon Vaill
B. A. 1896
Secretary of the Class of 1896 (1916-1967)
Father of the Author

George Dudley Vaill
B. A. 1935
Associate Secretary of the University (retired 1976)
Yale Medal 1977
The Author

William Henry Vanderbilt
B. A. (post obit.) 1893

John Ferguson Weir
M. A. (Hon.) 1871
Dean of the School of the Fine Arts (1869-1913)

Rev. Eleazar Wheelock
B. A. 1733, M. A. 1736
Founder and First President of Dartmouth College

John Hay Whitney
B. A. 1926, M. A. (Hon.) 1956
Fellow of the Corporation (1955-1973)
Yale Medal 1954

Theodore Dwight Woolsey
B. A. 1820, M. A. 1823
President of Yale College (1846-1871)
Fellow of the Corporation (1871-1885)

What They Did and Said

President Hadley frequently traveled from New Haven to New York on the railroad. One morning, as he settled into his seat, the conductor came by and said, "Good morning, Mr. Hadley." Later, when the conductor came back through the car, Mr. Hadley stopped him and asked, "How did you know my name?"

The conductor seemed surprised. "Well, Mr. Hadley," he said, "everybody knows who you are. You ride on these cars a good deal – and I've been on this train for seventeen years."

"Have you, indeed?" said Mr. Hadley, "Where did *you* get on?"

President Arthur Twining Hadley

Mr. Hadley was riding on a New Haven trolley car one day when a drunk got on, sat down behind him, and began to annoy him. Mr. Hadley went forward to the motorman and asked, "Do you permit intoxicated persons to ride on this car?"

The motorman replied, "Well, we're not supposed to, but if you go 'way back and sit in the rear of the car, nobody will notice you."

Appropriate Locations of Schools

President Hadley used to say that the graduate departments of the University were most appropriately situated: the Law School was built on the road to the jail, the Medical School was on the road to the cemetery, and the Divinity School was on the road to the poorhouse.

Dwight and Hadley in the Rain

Mr. Hadley's inauguration as President of the University, in 1899, was held in Battell Chapel. He and retiring President Timothy Dwight set out to walk together from Mr. Dwight's house

(located on College Street at the corner of Wall Street, where Sprague Hall now stands) to the ceremonies. Just as they stepped outdoors, a few drops a rain began to fall. Mr. Hadley had the foresight to bring an umbrella, which he offered to share with his predecessor. "Very well, I accept your offer of shelter," said Mr. Dwight, "but remember – until we get to the Chapel, it's still my reign!"

The Inauguration of Ezra Stiles

On the day of his inauguration as President of Yale College in 1778, Ezra Stiles recorded in his diary: "All was conducted without any Indecency, and with Propriety & Academic Decorum. The Undergraduates requested of the Corporation Permission to illuminate College and discharge Canon in the Evening. We did not directly refuse it, but dissuaded them from it."

Footrace on York Street

Some years ago, when Tap Day was still a public, outdoor spectacle, the members of Book & Snake failed to fill their quota of 15 Juniors by 5:00 p.m. and left Branford Court with only 12 or 13 candidates committed. This shortfall occasioned widespread campus gossip and speculation.

The next morning, Lee Gibbons, Manager of the Yale Co-Op and a prominent graduate member of Book & Snake, was sitting in his office when he spotted a shoplifter actively engaged in his profession. At the moment when Lee made his discovery, the thief, realizing that he had been observed, ran out the front door and up York Street, with Gibbons in hot pursuit. Bill DeVane, Dean of Yale College, was standing on the sidewalk, talking with a friend. As the two speeding figures passed in their headlong flight, Bill remarked, "I see Book & Snake is still tapping."

Jeremiah Day, Sickly President

Perhaps the story of Jeremiah Day, the ninth President of Yale, will give some of us renewed hope. Born in 1773, he spent his infancy and boyhood in constant ill health. He entered Yale as a Freshman in 1789 but had to withdraw two years later on account of pulmonary trouble. The doctors despaired of his life. He was just 18 years old.

But he recovered and was able to return to Yale two years later. In 1795 he graduated, and two years after that, he became a tutor at the newly-founded Williams College, where he served for two years although continuously ill with what seems to have been a tubercular condition. Franklin B. Dexter, Yale's great historian, says that Day served at Williams "with some hesitation on account of feeble health and depression of spirits." The doctors despaired of his life. He was barely 25.

Day returned to Yale as a tutor and was licensed to preach. In 1801, he suffered a hemorrhage brought on by the exertion of preaching. Being in a generally run-down condition, he took the advice of his doctor and sailed for the more salubrious climate of Bermuda. Shortly after his departure, the Yale Corporation appointed him Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, but his friends – and Day himself – never expected that he would live to fill the post. Those doctors despaired of his life. He was just 28.

Returning the following year, he went to his father's home in New Preston to rest, firmly persuaded that he was a hopeless invalid. His health gradually improved, however, and he was able to return to Yale in 1803. For about fourteen years, he enjoyed indifferent health – never really well – never seriously ill. The doctors were noncommittal.

In 1817, upon the death of Timothy Dwight, Jeremiah Day was offered the Presidency of Yale. He declined the honor, on the grounds that he was in precarious health, and that the job was too demanding, physically, for him to undertake. Having resumed their despair, the doctors were once more shaking their heads. He was already 44. But he was persuaded to take the position. He had a number of illnesses in the early years of his incumbency, but nothing really fatal.

Then, in 1836, he suffered the first of a series of heart attacks, and the doctors really despaired of his life. He was, after all, 63 years old by this time, and not in very robust health. He asked the Corporation to let him resign, but they succeeded in persuading him to stay on a little longer – another ten years. He finally laid down the burdens of office in 1846 after serving 29 years – the longest term of any Yale President. He was pretty well tired out, and the doctors, of course, despaired of his life. He was now 73 and in very fragile health. He told his friends that he did not expect to live much longer.

But along came that persistent Corporation and asked him to serve as one of its members. Mr. Day apparently found it difficult to say no. He served on the Corporation for the ensuing 21 years – until just before his untimely death at the age of 94.

Dexter, in his biographical sketch of President Day, says: "A post-mortem examination showed the presence of a large number of calculi of considerable size in his bladder, which must have caused intense pain, of which, however, he had (characteristically) never spoken. The same examination showed the scars upon both lungs which testified to the cure, more than sixty years before, of advanced tubercular consumption"

Shortly after Jeremiah Day became President, it was proposed that modern languages be added to the curriculum. Day was not enthusiastic about so radical a change. He said that if French was to be taught at Yale, soon there would be a course in whittling.

Jeremiah Day (l), Theodore Dwight Woolsey, and Benjamin Silliman (r) in 1860

George Day On the Road

George Parmly Day, Treasurer of the University from 1910 to 1942, was indefatigable in his efforts to raise money for Yale. At an 1897 Class Dinner one evening, a classmate asked George to tell them what he did at Treasurer. George said that, on a typical trip, he went to Philadelphia and called on wealthy alumni and twisted their arms. Then he would take a train for Harrisburg, where he would put the bite on a few fat cats. Next on the itinerary would be Pittsburgh, where he would repeat the performance before moving on to Cleveland. "You might say," said George, "that I lead a touch-and-go existence."

George Parmly Day

Undertaker's Assistant

A wealthy Connecticut citizen, a loyal Son of Eli, lay dying, and Yale waited somewhat expectantly. When someone asked President Angell whether the Treasurer was aware of the situation, he replied, with that well-known twinkle in his eye, "Oh, yes. George is down in Fairfield County right now with his black gloves in his pocket."

Well-Dressed Officers

President Angell appeared at a Class Dinner in New York one evening wearing a dinner jacket and black tie – but (through some error in the packing of his suitcase) he was wearing light gray flannel trousers. When he rose to speak, he explained the reason for what appeared to be a sartorial blunder: "Things are so bad at Yale nowadays that the Treasurer and I have to share one set of evening clothes. This is George's night to wear the pants."

The Most Expensive Words

In an article entitled "Fifty Years Ago and Now" in the 1916 Classbook, William Beebe, of the Class of 1873, stated that the Class of 1837 was "the only class that ever gave to the country a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court [Morrison R. Waite], a Secretary of State [William M. Evarts], and a President." He goes on to clarify his inclusion of the third office: "Samuel J. Tilden is the only man ever elected to the presidency who has surrendered his title to the office from patriotic motives."

Tilden entered Yale in June of 1834 and left after one term. He is quoted as having declared that "the diet in Commons and the climate were obnoxious." In spite of the brevity of his sojourn among the gustatory and meteorological delights of New Haven, Yale gave him a B. A. degree and official enrollment in the Class of 1837 on the occasion of his being awarded an LL. D. in 1875, in recognition of his public and private achievements.

As the Democratic nominee for the presidency in the election of 1876, Tilden received 250,000 more popular votes than his Republican opponent, Rutherford B. Hayes, and appeared to have won the electoral vote by a score of 184 to 163. The election was vigorously disputed, however, on the basis of questionable returns from some Southern states. An Electoral Commission, appointed to settle the matter, gave the victory to Hayes by the margin of one vote.

There were accusations of fraud on both sides, with special emphasis on what were called "questionable negotiations of visiting statesmen of the Democratic party" in the South, which were reported in certain "cipher dispatches" in the *New York Tribune*. Although Tilden maintained that he had no personal knowledge of these activities, he was, of course, accused of complicity.

President Emeritus Theodore Dwight Woolsey took no active part in politics, but during the presidential campaign of 1876, he published a letter in which he said: "I feel thus – that Mr. Tilden has sought his office with a most uncommon anxiety." Two years later, Woolsey made an even more devastating statement: "The publication of the cipher dispatches by *The Tribune* makes it an impossibility for Mr. Tilden again to ask for the people's suffrage. I sincerely trust that we may be spared another such sight – an open trading for the highest office in the land. It was a disgrace and if Mr. Tilden was not the leader in it, he was undoubtedly *particeps criminis*."

Tilden, a bachelor with no close relatives, was said by reliable authority to have made Yale his residuary legatee (possibly, although no one openly suggested it, after receiving his LL. D.).

Offended by Woolsey's criticism, however, he rewrote his will, leaving the bulk of his fortune to the City of New York for the building of the Public Library. Since the residuary estate totaled about $10,000,000, Theodore Dwight Woolsey's statements about Tilden are sometimes called the most expensive words ever spoken by a Yale President, active or retired.

Timothy Dwight, Jogger

Timothy Dwight, the Younger, was a Yale Tutor from 1851 to 1855. One night (as Ben Holden tells it in his *Profiles and Portraits of Yale University Presidents*) the Tutor was awakened by a disturbance which ("as was his duty") he set out to investigate. The offending students, surprised by his sudden appearance, fled – with Timothy in hot pursuit. After a short time, realizing that he was gaining on them, he called out: "Gentlemen, if you do not run a little faster, I shall be obliged to overtake you!"

Unknown President

When Charles Seymour was President, he examined the lists of incoming Freshmen in the hope of finding sons of classmates among them. If he found any, he made a note to single out those individuals for special recognition.

At the Presidential reception for incoming students one year, Mr. Seymour stopped one Freshman and greeted him warmly as the son of one of his undergraduate friends. As they separated, the President said, "Give my warmest regards to your father." The boy passed along the receiving line but very shortly returned and said, "Excuse me, sir – what name shall I say?"

Charles Seymour

"The Great Commoner" Silenced

In the Presidential campaign of 1896, William Jennings Bryan came to New Haven and gave his "Cross of Gold" speech on the Green. The speech had been given so many times, and always in the same words, that people had memorized parts of it. At one point, he always said, "Ninety-nine out of a hundred people will tell you…" (and proceeded to quote *what* they would tell you). When he reached that point in his New Haven speech, he got as far as "Ninety-nine…" – and the Sophomore Class of 1899 cheered and applauded and whistled and yelled. Bryan, not knowing what had occasioned such an enthusiastic outburst, began again, "Ninety-nine…" – and again the cohorts of '99 rose up and yelled and whistled and applauded and cheered. Totally mystified and a little impatient, Bryan tried a third time to proceed and then gave up in frustration. Shrugging his shoulders, he waved to the crowd and sat down, to thunderous applause, led, of course, by the Class of '99.

The Gift of Prophecy

Although not generally credited with powers of clairvoyance, I did on one occasion, a long time ago, assist the crystal ball in foretelling what was in store for us. It was January of 1941. As an operative in the Alumni Office, I helped set up an evening meeting of the Yale Club of New Haven at the old Chi Psi house. After dinner, the entertainment was a quiz show, like those then popular on the radio, on the subject of Yale history. Called upon to select a 3-man panel of experts, I chose: (1) Charles Seymour, President of the University; (2) a rising young member of the History faculty, A. Whitney Griswold; and (3) the only undergraduate who was present, the Chairman of the Oldest College Daily, Kingman Brewster, Jr.

Bart Giamatti, being less than three years old at the time, was not eligible for selection.

A Loss to the Crew

The 1895 Classbook reports that a member of the Class gave up rowing after Freshman Year because it "made his legs straight and unfitted him for horseback riding."

Sign of the Times

After many years in Connecticut Hall, the Yale College Dean's Office was moved to the Sheffield-Sterling-Strathcona complex when the U. S. Army Air Force took over the Old Campus in World War II. As soon as the military had settled in, a large sign appeared over the Connecticut Hall door which had led to the decanal stronghold. Simply stated, it said: PROPHYLACTIC STATION.

The day the sign appeared, Bill DeVane dropped into Steve Buck's Freshman Office in Welch Hall, and we took him to the window to let him see the sign. "Well," said Bill, "the Dean's Office always was a place of purification."

Prohibition and Dean Mendell

When Clare Mendell became Dean of Yale College in 1926, he went to Washington and, through the help of a certain prominent alumni in the government, entered into discussions with officials in the Treasury Department which resulted in an agreement providing:

a) That the Prohibition enforcement division would not interfere with the operation of any liquor outlet in the New Haven area which had been given a clean bill of health by Clare after investigation by him or by operatives employed by him, his criteria for such clean bill to include no bad liquor of any kind, no women, no gambling, and no evidence of criminal connections; and
b) That Clare would report immediately to the Treasury Department the opening or operation of any outlet which did not fulfill his criteria.

This agreement was strictly observed throughout the remainder of the Prohibition years. Speakeasies which Clare approved were never raided, and no joint which he condemned lasted more than 24 hours after he had discovered it.

To assist Clare in his investigations, the Washington authorities planted an agent in New Haven. He was a part-time Methodist minister, and Clare arranged to have him accepted as the campus representative of the Wesley Foundation. He and his wife, both strict teetotalers, would dress up as a couple of questionable characters, visit the local speakeasies, and report to Clare.

Clare was a great believer in beer as the proper drink for undergraduates. He thought that if there were a convenient source of beer near the campus, students might not go so often to the downtown outlets to drink hard liquor. In the Fall of 1931, he went to Washington and saw his friends in the Treasury Department and described an idea which he had had for some time – to have a student club serving beer in the basement of the *Yale Record* building on York Street. It was not University property; the *Record* owned it. He called in a group of students and helped them set up what became known as the "Oyster Club" – with membership open to any student or member of the Faculty at $1.00 a head. Beer, pretzels, crackers, and sandwiches were served at moderate prices. Music was sometimes heard in the evening – perhaps a few voices raised in song. No publicity whatsoever was given to the project; indeed, none was needed: word of the club spread across the campus overnight. It was generally understood that it wasn't quite legal, and the less said about it, the better. Why spoil something so good by questioning it or talking about it in public?

Well, this was the temptation which the undergraduate editors of the *News* could not resist. On January 27, 1932, the *New York Herald-Tribune* carried a front-page headline which said:

YALE MEN TESTING DEAN'S THEORY
WITH BEER IN BASEMENT OF '*RECORD*'

Following was a story which began:

> "*The Yale Daily News*" by expressing an editorial opinion on the newest of Yale's institutions, indiscreetly revealed today that undergraduates and faculty members have been enjoying themselves for the last six weeks at the Oyster Club, a restaurant serving beer better and stronger than any obtainable elsewhere in New Haven.

The article went on to describe Clare's convictions concerning beer for students and the enthusiastic reception which the experiment had met on campus.

Those who think that man first went into orbit in the 1960s should have been in Clare Mendell's office in Connecticut Hall when the *News* was delivered to his desk that morning. After making his re-entry and splashdown, he did the only thing he could do: he called his Washington contact and said, "I regret to report that the cat has been let out of the bag. You will have to come and raid us and close us down."

The Oyster Club was raided, the President of the Club was fined for running a speakeasy, Clare Mendell paid the fine, and that was the end of good beer almost on campus.

Clarence Mendell

Hadley, Scandinavian Linguist

At Yale's Bicentennial celebration in 1901, the delegate from Upsala University in Sweden rose and delivered an extemporaneous greeting to Mr. Hadley in Latin. Mr. Hadley, to no one's surprise, replied spontaneously, also in Latin. Senator Chauncey Depew, sitting on the platform, turned to a fellow member of the Corporation and whispered, "I didn't know Hadley could speak Swedish!"

Yale – Always going to the Dogs

At a Commencement dinner, a member of one of the reunion classes, a clergyman from the far West, publicly expressed his regret that morality at Yale had sunk so low that he did not dare send his boys to his alma mater. A member of another reunion class, called upon to respond, "outlined the tremendous work that was being done by our University, the high average scholarship of its graduates, the original research of its professors, and its power and influence for good, throughout this country." In conclusion, he said that he thanked God that he still had faith in "dear old Yale" and had not been afraid to send *his* boy there!

The alumnus who had been so critical of Yale was a member of the Class of 1848. The speaker who replied to him was Alphonso Taft, of the Class of 1833, a former Attorney General of the United States and a Fellow of the Corporation – and the "boy" was William Howard Taft, who had graduated with honors on that day in 1878.

[The quotations are from a letter printed in the Yale Alumni Weekly in December, 1908]

Another alumnus wrote: "I don't think we are doing the things to preserve the thing we love at Yale – character. I think we have gone in for too much, for quantity, not for quality. You will find a different atmosphere here in Yale than there was in our time. There is no question about it… You don't find the same spirit of sacrifice and love for Yale." These words were written by a member of the Class of 1895 in 1920.

In the Harvard Yard

Clare Mendell was one of Yale's great anecdotists, but his stories were not necessarily limited to tales of our campus. He used to tell of an incident which occurred in Harvard Yard in Cambridge one evening before a Yale-Harvard football game.

A Harvard undergraduate, somewhat the worse for drink, had an altercation with a Yale student, popped him in the nose, and knocked him out cold. After examining the body critically for a few minutes, the Harvard gladiator went across the Yard to where the crusty Dean LeBaron Briggs lived in a third-floor apartment. The tower clock struck the hour of four as he rang the Dean's bell. Lights appeared on the third floor, then on the second, then on the ground floor. There was a great rattling of bolts, and finally the Dean, in full sleeping regalia, opened the door.

"Yes, yes, young man, what is it?" he asked with obvious impatience.

"I'm sorry, sir, to disturb you this way," said the undergraduate, "but I thought you ought to know that I think I've just killed a Yale man in the Yard."

Sputtering, Dean Briggs replied, "Surely you know better than to come to me at this hour with any such report. Call at the Dean's Office during regular business hours in the morning and claim the usual bounty!"

Horticultural Impasse

Charlton Lewis and Bernadotte Perrin were enjoying a leisurely walk through Branford Court one day when they came upon some beautiful flowers. "Oh, see the lovely irises!" Lewis exclaimed.

"Nonsense," replied Perrin, "not irises. They are irides."

After arguing the point for several minutes, they noticed that Professor Henry Beers had come into the quadrangle. They decided to let him settle their dispute. After listening to the argument, Beers said, "I am sorry, gentlemen. I cannot help you. I've always called them blue flag."

Rodential Confrontation

When Clare Mendell was Chairman of the Board of Control of the Athletic Association (*i.e.,* Director of Athletics), his office was on the ground floor of Durfee Hall, on the Elm Street side. One morning, when he entered the office, he discovered that the furniture had been moved about and things had been displaced. When he asked the janitor what had happened, he was told that the exterminators had been there the night before to get rid of the mice.

Clothing himself in a dudgeon, Clare (who mistrusted the telephone) dictated a letter to Fred Johnson at the University Service Bureaus demanding to know who had authorized the unwarranted invasion of his office and the moving of the furniture. Fred Johnson wrote back that he had authorized it – that as General Manager, he had official custody of all physical property in the

University, that there had been reports of mice in Durfee Hall, and that he had ordered the exterminators to exterminate them.

Clare immediately replied, "You had no business breaking into my office and removing those mice. Those were not University mice – they were Athletic Association mice, and I want them returned or replaced at once!'

The correspondence went on for some time, but Clare never got his mice back.

The Distinguished Chairs of President Taft

Anyone who finds himself holding a ticket for Seat 9, Section E Right, first balcony, in Woolsey Hall should be prepared for a mild shock: it is 24 inches wide. The standard Woolsey Hall seat measures 17 inches in width. From the time of his departure from the White House in 1913 to his appointment as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1921, William Howard Taft was a member of the Yale faculty. The seat in Woolsey Hall, specially designed for him, paid glowing tribute to his heroic amplitude while averting almost certain structural damage to University property. It survives today, along with gargantuan chairs (25 inches in width) in the Faculty Club and in the Corporation Room in Woodbridge Hall. The gentleman behemoth who occupied them was reported to have weighed in at 350 pounds, or 25 stone as the British crow flies.

The Taft Chair in Woodbridge Hall

At the time of his graduation in 1878, Mr. Taft weighed 225 pounds – 33 more than his nearest rival in a class whose statistician was careful to point out that the average weight in the 132-man group was 151 and the aggregate avoirdupois was 19,967 pounds. He was the heaviest man to graduate from Yale between 1866 and 1878.

Tradition says that a bathtub of megatherian proportions was installed in the White House when Mr. Taft became President. Perhaps the Smithsonian has it tucked away somewhere. It is impossible to confirm, at this time, the rumor that the water supply originally provided for that tub was later diverted to serve, in perpetuity, what has lately become known as Fanne Foxe Cove in Washington's Tidal Basin.

When Clare Mendell assumed the directorship of Yale Athletics in 1919, he thought he would make a hit with Professor Taft by allotting him two seats in the Bowl on his single-seat application. Clare neglected, however, to check the seating chart before mailing the tickets. Had he done so, he would have discovered that the two seats he had assigned were on opposite sides of the aisle.

Clare used to say that Mr. Taft was usually tolerant of irreverent comments about his acreage, but on this occasion, he was not amused.

William Howard Taft

The Grateful Bridegroom

When the Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes was Secretary of the University, he lived on Elm Street in the house which has, in recent years, been known as the Faculty Club. One evening, a young couple rang his doorbell and asked him to marry them. Enlisting Mrs. Stokes and the cook as witnesses, Anson performed the brief ceremony. Afterward the bridegroom took Anson aside and asked him how much the fee was. Concluding from their appearance that they probably had little to spare, Anson said there would be no charge.

The man expressed his sincere thanks and then said, "I'd like to show you my appreciation, sir. I work for the gas company. If you'll come down cellar with me, I'll show you how to fix your gas meter so it won't register."

Anson Phelps Stokes, Jr.

Lucius Beebe, Unforgettable Character

Lucius Beebe – poet, author, newspaper columnist, railroad buff, gourmet, and fashion plate – entered Yale as a member of the Class of 1925 and subsequently spent a year and a half with 1926.

Moving on to Harvard, he received an A. B. degree (Harvard gives an A. B., Yale gives a B. A.) in 1927 and was studying in the Graduate School when, as he expressed it himself at a later date, he "was bounced out for a physical encounter within the Yard limits of the University, and expulsion offense at Harvard."

His separation from Yale had been hastened by a public act quite in keeping with the general pattern of his collegiate conduct, which sometimes tried the patience of the authorities. The well-known actress Gaby DeLys was playing at the Hyperiod Theatre. The name of the production escapes me, but the performance had been blasted by no less a champion of community morals than the Reverend Henry Hallam Tweedy, of the Divinity School (always known as Tweedy, D. D.). Lucius Beebe hired the most conspicuous box in the theatre and made an ostentatious appearance there dressed as the good Dr. Tweedy, even including the familiar white beard. Raising a cocktail shaker on high, Beebe proclaimed that he was Henry Hallam Tweedy and that the show was dirty and indecent and should be closed. He then took off and escaped by way of a rear door, inviting a constabulary pursuit which was so prompt in responding that Lucius said they had come "in a horizontal trajectory."

Somehow eluding the police (as was his custom), he next showed up on the Old Campus, where he and Sherman Kent had a race with large baggage carts which they had borrowed from the railroad station. Lucius finally parked his cart in front of Connecticut Hall, wrapped a note saying "I resign" around a stone, and threw it through the window-glass of Dean Frederick Scheetz Jones's office.

Tradition says that the resignation was superseded by an expulsion. In any event, it was later revealed that when Lucius applied for admission to Harvard, the Dean at Cambridge called the Dean

at New Haven to find out what sort of person Beebe was. Dean Jones is reported to have said, in effect, "He is a poet of extraordinary ability, a completely charming and magnificently outrageous character, but if you can cope with him, I commend him to you – and may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

Some years later, Lucius's classmate Carlos F. Stoddard, Jr. encountered Beebe at a summer cocktail party. Stoddard was conventionally attired – white flannel trousers, a conservative blue jacket, unspectacular necktie. Lucius was bedizened in the most breath-taking and flamboyant splendor – striped trousers, afternoon coat, expansive ascot (the kind of vestiture which would eventually lead to his being voted, three times, the best dressed man in America). Stoddard couldn't resist complimenting him on his plumage. Beebe gave his friend a five-second appraisal and then said, "Well, Stoddard, you're apparently clean."

On another occasion, after the passage of quite a few years, Stoddard was emerging from "21" in New York with his 16-year-old daughter, whom he had just entertained at lunch, when they met Lucius coming in. Stoddard, with understandable pride, introduced her: "This is my daughter."

Beebe's critical inspection of the young lady consumed the statutory five seconds, whereupon he turned to the beaming father and said, "A likely story!" Then he addressed the daughter with great gallantry. "I suppose," he said, "he has been stupefying you with French vanilla."

Tom Bergin, '25, tells of visiting the reunion tent of the Class of 1926 and finding Lucius Beebe and Henry Rowell at the bar. After a decent exchange of pleasantries, they invited Bergin to join them in a drink. When Tom's potation had been served, Lucius said he would have one of the same. Upon receiving it, he tossed it off in a single gulp. "Ah," he said, "I'm a new man!" Handing his glass back, he said to the bartender, "Give the new man a drink."

Lucius Beebe

Hanc Statuam Hits 105

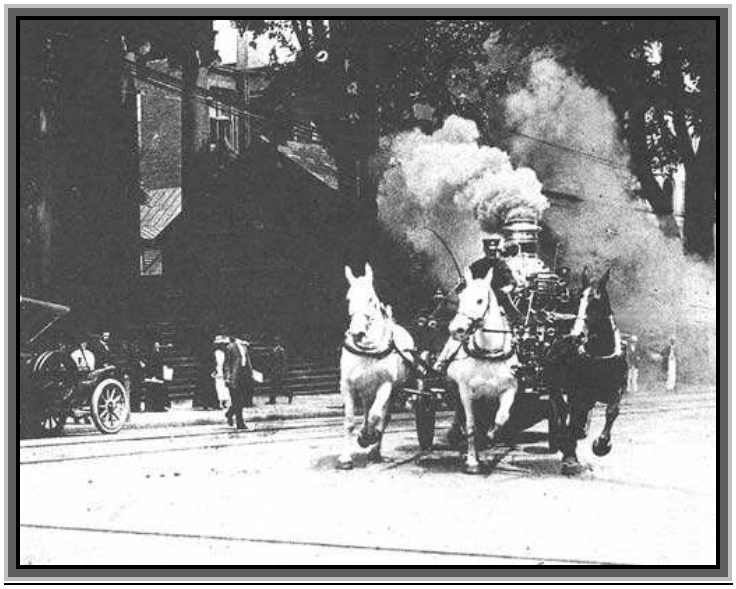
On June 24 of this year (1979), undoubtedly without fanfare, cake, candles, or the customary singing, the oldest inhabitant of the Old Campus, Hanc Statuam, will celebrate his 105th birthday. The occasion will be quite different from the one which he (under the name of Abraham Pierson) witnessed in 1874, when Connecticut's Governor and Chief Justice joined with President Noah Porter and others to watch John Ferguson Weir, first Dean of the School of Fine Arts, unveil the statue sculpted by Launt Thompson. (The program included five speeches, two prayers, and a song by the Glee Club.) Edwin Booth, the actor, posed for the figure, but since no portrait of Yale's first leader existed, the work was "an ideal production… a satisfactory representation of the facial characteristics which might well have appertained to a Puritain clergyman of the stamp of Rector Pierson."

Hanc's original location was next to Street Hall – and he faced Chapel Street, perhaps 30 feet away. When he was moved in the early 'nineties to make way for the building of Vanderbilt Hall, he was implanted in his present position, facing inward on the Campus with his back to High Street. Such orientation was in keeping with the trend of that era, as the College turned away from the public world outside and erected the perimeter buildings which created the Fortress Yale.

Those who do not know how Abraham's name was changed to Hanc are invited to consult the legend carved on the west side of the statue's pedestal.

Hanc Statuam

Famous News Picture



In 1910, when William Howard Taft was in the White House, a New York photographic service sent a cameraman to New Haven to get a picture of the President's son, Robert A. Taft, on his graduation day. Unable to find Taft among all the Seniors in the Commencement procession, the photographer exposed 23 of his 24 plates and then headed for the station to take a train back to New York. At the corner of Elm and College Streets, he was suddenly confronted by an exciting spectacle: a three-horse fire engine, belching a plume of smoke, turning into College Street. Quickly he exposed his last plate.

Later on, when the plate was developed, it was discovered that Taft, in cap and gown and carrying his diploma, was in a group of spectators standing on the sidewalk in front of the Methodist Church.

The photographer was Delmar Barney Roos, a Cornell engineering student who was working on a summer job for the photographic service. He later became Chief Engineer of the Studebaker Corporation and was the designer of the World War II jeep. Asked to name his proudest achievement, he always said, "I once made a famous news picture."

Famous News Picture Revisited

One day several years ago, I stood on the Battell Chapel corner with a copy of Roos's picture in my hand. I was amazed to see how little the scene had changed in more than 60 years: of course, the horses were dead, and a 1909 Cadillac parked on Elm Street had been towed away, but the background was the same – the church, the Elihu Society house, and Hendrie Hall. Entranced by the whole thing, I wanted to share my excitement with someone. Just then a coeducational female girl student came along the walk, and I asked her, "Would you like to see a fascinating picture?"

Tossing her pretty head as she quickened her step, she replied, with emphasis on each word, "I certainly would *not!*"

Branford, Hotbed of Humor

At a Branford College Fellows' meeting, Steve Buck was reporting that the Branford football team was being coached by a young fellow who was studying for the ministry up on Prospect Street, and from the back of the room came the voice of George Nettleton: "There is a divinity that shapes our ends."

After the War, the grass in Branford Court was replanted – the Navy's marching had killed every blade – and the pigeons came in from the Green to feast upon the seed. I remarked one day that the larcenous birds were completely disregarding the PLEASE KEEP OFF THE GRASS signs, whereupon George Nettleton said, "Someone ought to put those signs into Pidgin English."

Inviting the Rebel Yell

Many years ago, the affairs of the Yale Band (ancestor of the modern Precision Marching Band) were handled by a so-called Faculty Adviser, Joe Ellis, longtime Registrar of Freshmen. One of his duties was to select, each week in the football season, the appropriate piece for the Band to play between the halves in honor of the visiting team.

Yale played the University of Georgia every year but one between 1923 and 1934. In preparation for one of these games (I am not sure which one), Joe had the Band practice the only song he knew which had to do with the visitors' homeland – "Marching Through Georgia." Out at the Bowl, just in the nick of time, somebody intervened and perhaps averted what might have been a resumption of The War Between the States.

Annabel, the Straight Man

Billy and Annabel Phelps frequently entertained at dinner, with ten or twelve guests at their table, which usually had a large floral piece in the center. Billy, at one end, would ask the blessing in almost inaudible tones, following which Annabel would lean around the centerpiece and say, "Billy, I didn't hear a word you said."

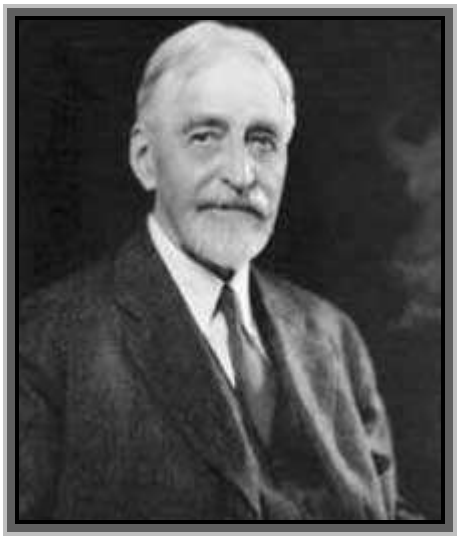
Billy's invariable reply was well known to those friends who dined there regularly: "My dear," he would say, "I wasn't speaking to you."

Billy was incurably addicted to the pun as one of the principal parts of speech. It was not beneath him to say, as he did to me one morning, "I had pancakes for breakfast. I ate them syruptitiously."

William Lyon Phelps

Indians in the President's House

Henry Farnam built the house at 43 Hillhouse Avenue in 1871, the same year in which he received an Honorary M. A. from Yale. At this death in 1883, he bequeathed the residence to the University for use as the President's House – subject to the life occupancy of Mrs. Farnam and their youngest son. She died in 1904. The son, Henry Walcott Farnam, lived there until his death in 1933. The house was then remodeled by the architectural firm of Kimball & Husted.



Henry Wolcott Farnam

The first President to occupy the official residence was Charles Seymour. When he and Mrs. Seymour went with Caesar Lohmann to inspect the house and discuss its furnishings, they discovered, in the state dining room, a piece of marble statuary depicting a group of American Indian women. The sculpture had been created in some central European country – Czechoslovakia or some such hotbed of Mohawk culture – and the subjects were a lot heavier than women normally like to be. The Seymours said they thought they could dispense with it, but no one wanted to risk offending surviving members of the Farnam family who might have sentimental feelings about it. Caesar told them not to worry – he would take care of it.

The statuary was removed under wraps, broken up with sledge hammers, and given decent burial in Hamden, on a piece of University property which was being used for horticultural experiment.

It was, however, ordained that the Indian girls were not to be permitted to rest in peace. Their grave lay in the pathway of the new Wilber Cross Parkway, and an unfeeling bulldozer exposed them to the light of another day.

Such an archaeological mother lode naturally generated considerable excitement. The pieces of marble were carefully cleaned and delivered to the Art Gallery.

When Caesar Lohmann was apprised of the resurrection of the Indian maidens, he made certain profane noises which were not uncommon to him. Straightaway he directed that they be taken for another ride – on a barge this time, out into New Haven Harbor, at the bottom of which they now lie, embellishing somebody's oyster bed and awaiting the arrival of an unfeeling dredge bent on deepening the channel.

Lohmann To the Rescue Once Again

When the Whitney Griswolds were preparing to succeed the Seymours as occupants of the official residence, Caesar Lohmann was once more the tour guide for the preliminary visit of inspection. At the foot of the main staircase in the front hall hung a full-length portrait of Henry Farnam. Whit and Mary decided that they didn't want the picture, but they were concerned because a brass plate on the fram identified the subject as the one "WHO GAVE THIS HOUSE TO YALE UNIVERSITY."

Caesar, of course, had an immediate solution: he said that they would strike out the T and make it read "WHO GAVE *HIS* HOUSE…" and move him to Commons, where he hangs to this day.

Mac Makes the Grade

After one of Chauncy Tinker's classes one day in the early 'twenties, several students gathered at his desk to ask about the warning grades which he was about to report to the Registrar. When his turn came Mac Aldrich asked what his mark was going to be. Tink said it was a 75. When Mac expressed his surprise and disappointment, Tinker asked, "You are a football player, are you not, Mr. Aldrich?" Mac, being the Captain of the 1921 team, had to confess that he was. "Seventy-five," said Tink, "is a very good mark for a football player."

Greetings To Harvard – and Vice Versa

In September of 1936, when Harvard was about to celebrate its Tercentenary, Clare Mendell was asked to prepare the Latin text for Yale's official greetings, which were to be printed by the University Press. The message was to be spread over the inside pages of an 11" x 16" folder, on the outside cover of which preliminary salutations to Harvard were to be set forth, as follows:

PRAESES ET SOCII
UNIVERSITATIS YALENSIS
PRAESIDI SOCIISQUE
COLLEGII HARVARDIANI
SALUTEM

At the Press, Carl Purington Rollins, Printer to the University (a superb typographer – but a Harvard alumnus), dissatisfied with the appearance of the page with the lines in this order, rearranged them to achieve a well-rounded contour and, in so doing, reversed the direction in which the greetings were to travel. Harvard was now sending salutations to Yale:

PRAESIDI SOCIISQUE
UNIVERSITATIS YALENSIS
COLLEGII HARVARDIANI
PRAESES ET SOCII
SALUTEM

The official copy of the finished document was signed by President James Rowland Angell and Secretary Carl Albert Lohmann and sent off to Harvard by mail.

A day or so before the Tercentenary celebration, Clare Mendell chanced to see a copy of the congratulatory message as it had been printed and immediately called Caesar's attention to the gaffe. Hoping to rectify the unfortunate error before Harvard noticed it, Lohmann took instantaneous action.

Printers were called from their beds in the dead of night to make the corrected copy – the document was quite elaborate and printed in two colors – and the finished piece was taken to the President and the Secretary at their homes for their signatures. Then it was dispatched to Cambridge by a special messenger via automobile. How he was able to make the proper substitution at Harvard without being detected in the act, the records do not say. If the error was discovered, Harvard gave no indication of it – at least, not at that time.

After the incorrect document had been brought back to New Haven and delivered to Caesar, he ordered that all other copies of it be surrendered to him so that every shred of evidence of the mistake might be destroyed. On a chance visit to Woodbridge Hall, Clare Mendell saw the assembled copies on the Secretary's table, and when Caesar left the room for a moment, Clare tucked one copy under his coat and preserved it for posterity.

After Clare's death, Tibby Mendell gave me the bootleg copy and a copy of the corrected version. I placed them in the custody of the University Archivist for permanent record.

The suspicion that someone in Cambridge did discover the error was revived by a subtle gesture many years later: when Kingman Brewster was inaugurated as President in 1964, Harvard sent handsome printed greetings in Latin – with a typewritten English translation.

From the Yale College Catalogue of 1846

"The students are not considered as regular members of the College, till, after a residence of at least six months, they have been admitted to matriculation, on satisfactory evidence of an unblemished moral character. Before this they are only students on probation."

The Building – Formerly an Indian

A letter from a Middle Westerner addressed in the Office of the Secretary, several months ago, said, in part: "Ebenezer Cleaveland was my great grandfather. He was a graduate of your school when it was called Dartmouth."

At first attributed to mid-continent provincialism, the writer's confusion became understandable when we look at the record: Ebenezer Cleaveland was prepared for college by the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock, the founder and first President of Dartmouth College. Admitted to Yale in 1744, he was expelled in 1745 for attending – with his parents – meeting of a "separate" congregation, a group of "New Lights." Apparently forgiven in 1775, he was awarded his Yale B. A. In the same year, Dartmouth, to which he had given valuable service, gave him an Honorary M. A.

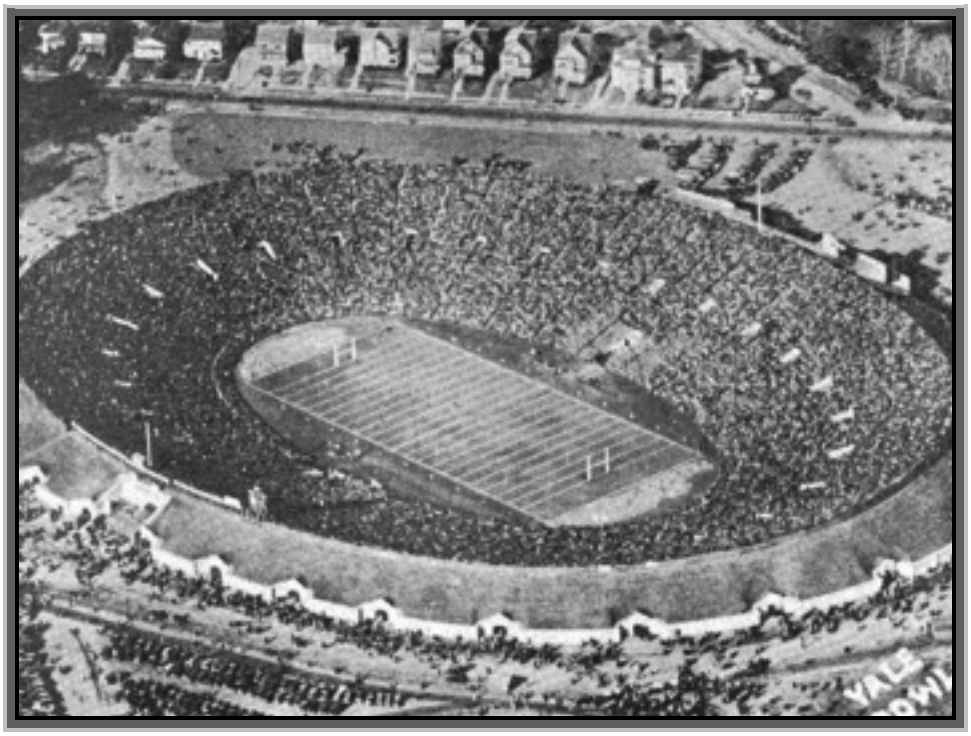
The Yale-Harvard Game of 1899

In the Fall of 1899, the Yale-Harvard football game was played in Cambridge, and a member of the Class of 1900 went up from New Haven the day before. Celebrating in the evening, he took on quite a cargo of beverages and, in a state of euphoria, went about among his Harvard friends and bet a total of about $250 in support of the proposition that Harvard wouldn't even score the next day.

When he woke up in the morning, his companions told him what he had done while under the influence of John Barleycorn (as it was spoken of in those days). After hasty reflection, he decided that the solution to his predicament was to turn the tables the other way by betting a similar amount among his Yale friends that the Sons of Eli wouldn't even score. Then, resisting the temptation to commit suicide, he went to the game.

It was a scoreless tie. To celebrate the occasion, he took his winnings and hired a special car on the train, invited 40 or 50 of his friends to join him, took on two bartenders and an adequate supply of food and drink (perhaps more of the latter) and had a real party on the way back to New Haven. Tradition says he arrived at the station without a cent in his pocket – but with some lovely memories of a fairly good weekend.

In the 1901 Classbook, the author of the Junior Year sketch referred to that football contest, writing: "The game at Cambridge bound us to Harvard by yet another tie."



The Yale Bowl, completed in 1914

The Dead – Shall They Be Raised?

In 1845, when architect Henry Austin's Egyptian gate was built at the entrance to Grove Street Cemetery, President Jeremiah Day is reported to have looked at the inscription –

THE DEAD SHALL BE RAISED

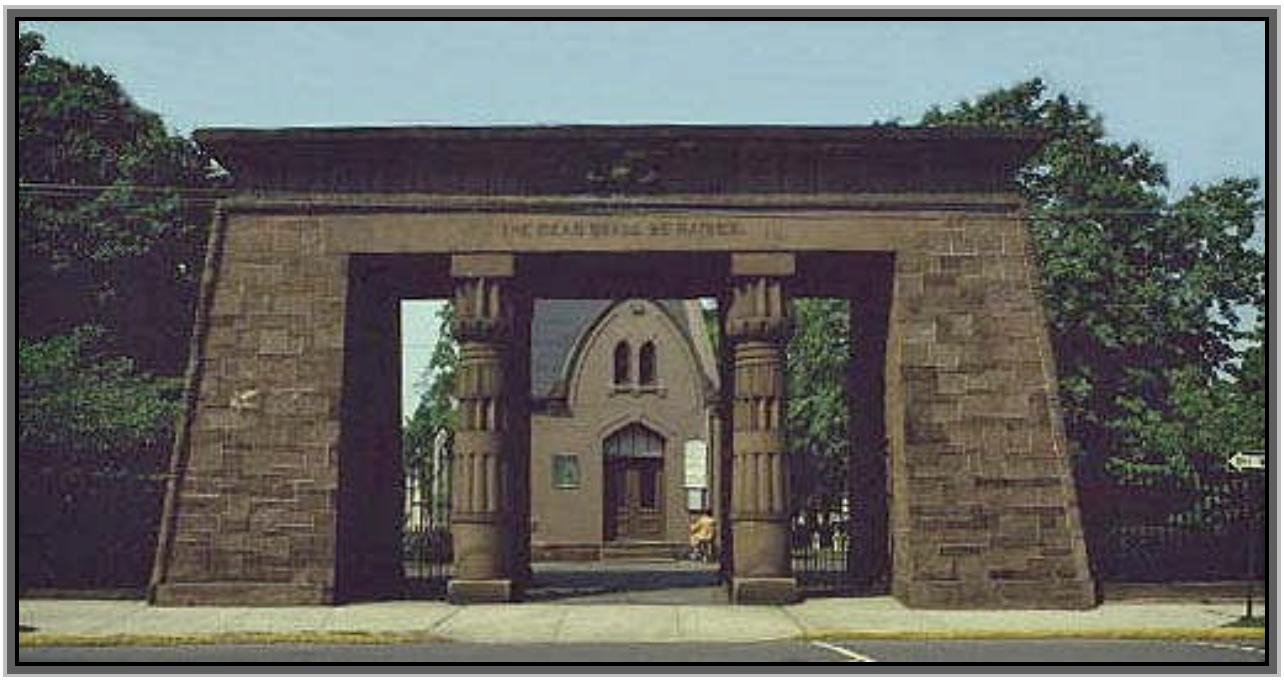
- and said, "They certainly shall if Yale ever needs the property." It was also reported that the same declaration was made by President Theodore Dwight Woolsey shortly after he took office.

Subsequently the remark was successively attributed to Presidents Porter, Dwight, Hadley, Angell, Seymour, and Griswold.

In March of 1974, I was instrumental in having executed and filed in the University archives a document reading:

> To Whom It May Concern:
>
> Although I realize that what I am doing is contrary to established presidential tradition, I hereby certify that I have never, in public or in private, stated that THE DEAD in Grove Street Cemetery SHALL BE RAISED if Yale needs the property.
>
> Signed,
>
> Kingman Brewster, Jr.

Bart Giamatti will be next.

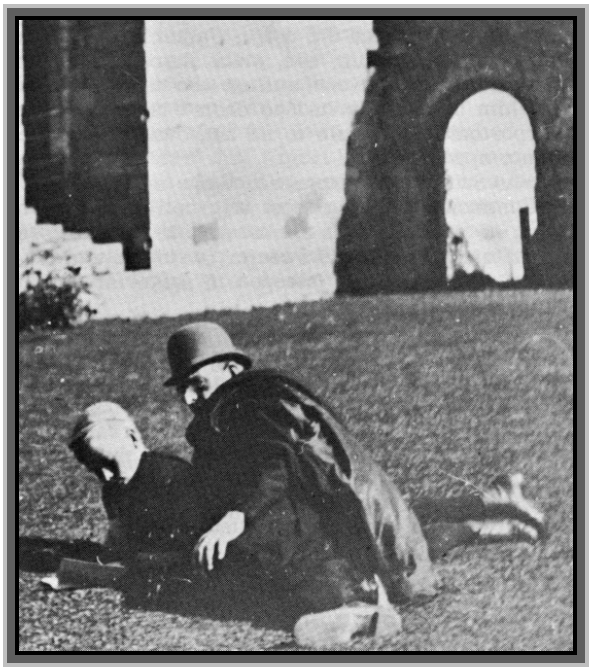


Henry Austin's Egyptian gate at Grove Street Cemetery

Timothy Dwight on Grass

In the summer before my father entered Yale as a Freshman in the Class of 1896, he traveled abroad with his mother and sister and a cousin. Among the other passengers aboard the Cunard steamer were President and Mrs. Timothy Dwight. My grandmother and Mrs. Dwight had known each other in some earlier connection, and the two families enjoyed a pleasant voyage together.

After landing at Liverpool, they went their separate ways, but the Vaills and the Dwights encountered each other several times as they traveled through England and Scotland. They went together to visit Dryburgh Abbey, near Edinburgh, in which there was a courtyard carpeted with a lawn of extraordinary lushness. Father's cousin (George E. Dudley, Harvard A. B. 1899), unable to resist the temptation, lay down on the grass, whereupon Mr. Dwight did likewise, resting himself on George and suggesting that Father take their picture. It shows the President of Yale University – one of the most dignified of men – in a moment of undignified and playful relaxation.



George E. Dudley (l) and Timothy Dwight

About two weeks after college opened in the Fall of 1892, Mrs. Dwight sent a note to my father's room inviting him to Sunday dinner. Unfortunately, she neglected to sign the note. Father did not recognize the handwriting and, since there were two or three other New Haven families who might have invited him to dine, he had no choice but to hope for an opportunity to explain to an unknown host why he had not appeared.

As Sunday noon approached, he set out, alone, for Commons. Resting from a grueling week and having no special plans for the day, he was dressed quite informally – an old sweater, wrinkled trousers, and heavy shoes – and (steeped in sartorial sin) he was unshaven.

As he was passing the President's House on College Street, Mrs. Dwight was just opening the front door to admit a guest. Seeing Father on the sidewalk, she called to him, "Come in, Dudley. We are expecting you." Covered with embarrassment, humiliated, and confused, he went into the house. In a dinner company which included several prominent members of the Faculty and a visiting out-of-town preacher, Father didn't wish to upset his hostess by telling her that she had failed to sign her invitation.

He dropped in to call on Mrs. Dwight a few days later and explained what had happened. Not long afterward, Mrs. Dwight invited Father to Sunday dinner again. She added a post script to her note: "You see I have signed my name this time!"

Massachusetts, Where Are You?

Yale, normally far removed from the political upheavals which plague distant lands, was briefly touched by a manifestation of the fugacious nature of thrones in Black African nations when, in December of 1960, King Kigeri V of Rwanda-Urundi visited New Haven and made a formal call upon President Griswold. Towering six feet, nine inches in the air and surrounded by a retinue of bodyguards of nearly similar altitude, this courtly and dignified monarch made a lasting impression in Woodbridge Hall. He and Whit got along wonderfully together, each obviously appreciating the other's unique wit – one of the few things they had in common.

Sad indeed was the news which reached us a few weeks later – that Kigeri had been deposed during his absence and had to seek asylum in a neighboring country. Before hearing of his dethronement, however, we had received a remembrance of his visit – a large portrait of himself in full ceremonial regalia. The postal directions on the package read:

President Dr. A. Whitney Griswold
The Yale University
Connecticut
Massachusetts
United States of America

We had, of course, had earlier indications of the obscurity which characterizes the adjacent Commonwealth. The revelation appeared many year ago.

Upon arriving at Le Havre after an Atlantic crossing, Sherman Kent wanted to send a cablegram to friends in Boston. Communication facilities being surprisingly primitive for such a busy port, he had some difficulty in locating a telegraph office. When he finally found one, he wrote out his message and handed it to the clerk. This *fonctionnaire* looked at it for a moment and then took down a gigantic atlas and began to run his fingers down its columns of names. "Ah," he finally said in triumph, "Boston, Meeneesota!"

"No," said Sherman, "Boston, Massachusetts."

More searching. "Ah, Boston, Neevahdah!"

"No, Boston, Massachusetts."

"Boston, Oh-hee-oh?"

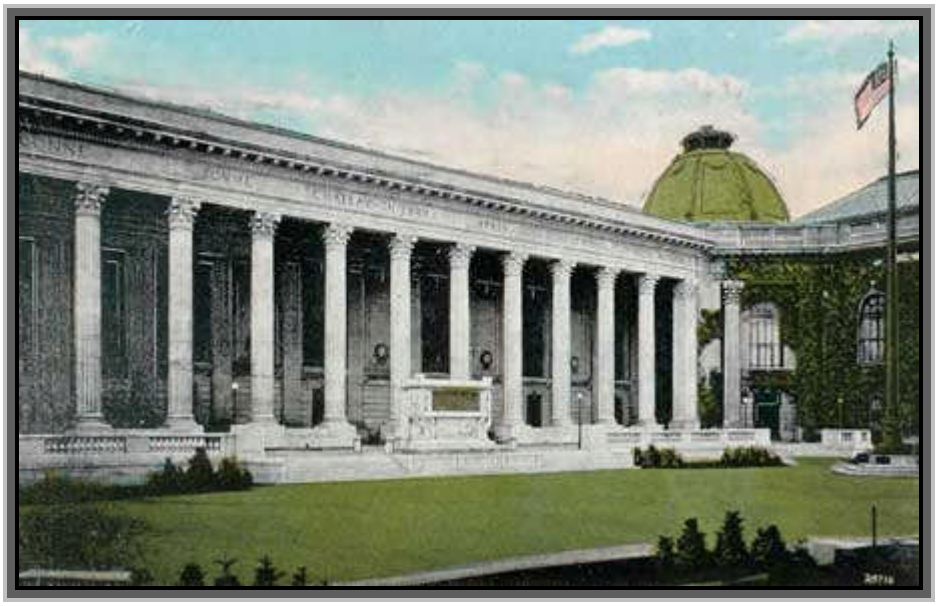
Again Sherman indicated, somewhat impatiently, that that wasn't right, either, whereupon, with an air of finality and disgust, the clerk closed the book and said, "Monsieur, Boston, Massachusetts – ça n'existe pas!"

"Beinecke Plaza" It is Not

When the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library was completed in 1963, some benighted but imaginative *News* heeler first conferred the name "Beinecke Plaza" upon the area bounded by the University Dining Hall, Woolsey and Woodbridge Halls, Wall Street, and the structure from which the compellation was filched. (Bad as this is, it would have been worse if a suggested alternative, the pejorative "Ersatz Plaza," had taken root.) Not only has an unauthorized and illegitimate christening taken place here – the perpetuation of the transplanted name of one generous benefactor (actually a whole family) has almost completely expunged that of another.

The area's proper name is "Hewett University Quadrangle." It was so designated in 1914 to honor Frederick Charles Hewitt, B. A. 1858, who left Yale a bequest of $500,000 in unrestricted funds upon his death in 1908. The fact that he gave $1,500,000 to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and $2,000,000 to the New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital should not be invidiously invoked to temper the gratitude of Mother Eli. A half-million, then or now, is not to be equated with cracked corn for barnyard fowls.

His biographer related that Hewitt inherited a large fortune from his father and another from his brother and increased his capital "by judicious investments" and through his connection "with several strong financial institutions." Chronically unemployed, he spent much of his time collecting fine art, riding to hounds, and otherwise frittering away his life. He might have made some decent girl an acceptable husband, but he never married. And now, at this time-point, one of the few things he still had going for him – quadrangular immortality – is seriously threatened by the callous unconcern of a new generation.



Hewitt University Quadrangle at Yale
(Ledyard Flagstaff at right)

Ledyard Flagstaff It Is

A prominent resident of Hewitt Quadrangle is the Ledyard Memorial Flagstaff, erected in honor of Lieutenant Augustus Canfield Ledyard, 6th Infantry, USA (B. A. 1898), who was killed in the Philippines in 1899. The staff was given by his classmates and dedicated at their Decennial Reunion in June, 1908. The presentation address was delivered before a large audience by the Hon. William Howard Taft (then Secretary of War and about to be elected President of the United States), who was celebrating his 30th Reunion. President Hadley accepted the gift on behalf of the University.

Mounted on a base of bronze and granite, the staff is of wood. (A written statement, read many years ago, that the staff was once a ship's mast, at present defies all attempts at rediscovery.) The memorial was designed by Carrère & Hastings, the architects of the Bicentennial Buildings (Commons, Woolsey, and Woodbridge).

The American flag flies from the Ledyard staff every day (weather permitting). When it is flown at half-staff, the name of the person whose memory is being honored is inserted in a small card-holder located at the base.

"Freshman Customs" of 1931

In these days when there are no rules by which one student governs the conduct of another, it is interesting to recall those regulations, promulgated by the Seniors, which we, as Freshmen in 1931, were required to observe. Each of us was given a printed list entitled "Freshman Customs" – which said we were:

- NOT to smoke a pipe or cigar on the campus or the street.
- NOT to go without a hat or blue necktie except on Derby Day (May 15).
- NOT to sit on the Sophomore Fence except on the day of the Harvard Freshman Baseball Game – in case Harvard is defeated.
- NOT to sit downstairs in any New Haven theatre or movie palace unless accompanied by an upper-classman.
- NOT to gild gargoyles on University buildings. (Sophomore privilege.)
- NOT to rollerskate, play marbles, spin a top, or roll a hoop on campus. (Senior privilege.)
- Not to omit tipping hats to Seniors and members of the Faculty on campus.

Nothing was said about penalties or about how the rules would be enforced. We accepted them as holy writ and wouldn't have considered for a moment being so boorish as to violate them. Having one's hat suddenly blown off by the wind could precipitate an embarrassing crisis.

It is devastating to realize that the present Freshman Class (1982) bears the same chronological relationship to my Class as we did to the class of 1888!

Old Hat

In the middle 'thirties, a local clothing monger advertised a contest in the Oldest College Daily: we were asked to clip a printed ballot from the paper and send it in bearing our vote for that

student or member of the Faculty who, in our opinion, habitually wore the most disreputable hat. The winner was to be presented with a fine prize – a new hat of his own selection.

When the victor's name was announced, he indignantly refused to accept the prize or have anything to do with the matter, even though the vote in his favor had been overwhelming.

His name was Chauncey Brewster Tinker.

Elihu Comes To Yale

As President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower made an official visit to India. One of the gifts given to him by his host, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, was a portrait of Elihu Yale – painted by an unknown artist when the great East Indian Nabob lived in Madras. When Eisenhower returned to Washington, he sent the portrait, quite appropriately, to Yale, which had honored him with an LL. D. in 1948.

In 1960, when Nehru's daughter, Mrs. Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi, came to New Haven to receive the Howland Prize and to deliver the Howland Lecture, she was invited to unveil the painting in the Presidents' Room in Memorial Hall, where it has continued to hang.

The picture was shipped to New Haven in a crate of better-than-ordinary workmanship – whether of Indian or Washington origin, it could not be determined. For nearly 20 years, it has served as a very decorative built-in bookcase in my living room.

If some descendant of mine removes it, he will find on the back a label indicating that it was sent by the President at the White House to the President at Woodbridge Hall.

Elihu Yale portrait

The President Emeritus and the Hot-Rod

After he retired, President Angell was assigned a parking space in back of what was then called Alumni Hall (now known as 451 College Street). The parking area was only half its present size, and Mr. Angell's marked reservation was right next to the window of the below-ground-level office which, as Director of the Class Reunion Bureau, I occupied. Mr. Angell parked there

infrequently, but when he found a trespasser's car in his place, he was inclined to react with some vigor.

When he drove in one day in 1938, his stall was habituated by a Model A Ford sport roadster with rumble seat – an assemblage of wheels greatly favored by undergraduates of the time. Mr. Angell parked his car in another space and then came to my window. "Mr. Vaill," he said (people didn't use first names even with inferiors in that remote era), "I trust that this is not your vehicle which is usurping my private territory." I assured him that it was not. He then asked for a scratch-pad and pencil and, muttering the while, hastily wrote a note which he stuck under the windshield wiper:

CONGRATULATIONS UPON
YOUR APPOINTMENT AS
PRESIDENT EMERITUS!

At a dinner for the Corporation that evening, Howell Cheney, who was about to retire after 25 years of service as a Fellow, greeted Mr. Angell by saying, "I got your note, Jim. Thanks for your felicitations."

Many years later, Mr. Cheney's daughter, upon hearing the story, said that the flashy roadster was one which her father frequently borrowed from her brother Kimberly, of the Class of 1931.

James Roland Angell

Don't Drink the Water!

When did you last encounter a case of typhoid fever? In April of 1901, Anson Phelps Stokes, Secretary of the University, sent a notice to every undergraduate reading as follows:

> Many cases of Typhoid Fever have recently developed in that section of the city west of York Street, and fed from the Dawson Lake Reservoir. The cause of the infection has, it is thought, been discovered and removed, while that part of New Haven in which the majority of students lives secures its water almost entirely from other sources.
>
> Acting under the advice of the Health Officer and some of the best known local physicians, and with the approval of the Dean of the Academical Department and the Director of the Sheffield Scientific School, it has been decided, however, to urge all students to REFRAIN FOR THE PRESENT FROM DRINKING ANY CITY WATER WHICH HAS NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY BOILED. It is also advisable that no uncooked vegetables be eaten. If these simple rules are observed, there need be no fear on the part of students of the University or their parents.

It might be said that Yale is indebted to the typhoid bacillus, *Salmonella typhosa*, for one of its major dormitories: Vanderbilt Hall, erected in 1894, was given by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt in memory of their son, William Henry Vanderbilt, of the Class of 1893, whose untimely death in his Junior year was caused by typhoid fever, which he was believed to have contracted by drinking water from the College pump.

Vanderbilt Hall

Clare Mendell, Dirt Farmer

Clare and Tibby Mendell owned property in the town of Bethany, about 10 miles from the campus, for many years – originally just wide acreage with a trout stream and a big barn, to which they eventually added a tennis court. Branford College picnics and softball games were regular events at what Clare called "Mendell's Folly."

An enthusiastic gardener, Clare tilled the rich and rocky soil vigorously long before they built the house in which he and Tibby spent their terminal years. He always raised more produce than his family could possibly use, and he took great pleasure in sharing the abundance of his plantation. As neighbors, we constantly benefited from his generosity. Clare, dressed in old clothes and driving an ancient rattletrap, would stop in front of the house, blow the horn, and sing out, "Luigi, the Vegetable Man! What do you want – squashes, radishes, tomatoes, corn?" From the heavily-laden back seat, he would bring in whatever we had chosen, and then he would sit awhile, take a nip from a bottle of Irish pot still whiskey which I kept just for him, and fill the air with great clouds of deliciously fragrant pipe smoke.

One summer day, Clare took a basket of vegetables to the home of a prominent New Haven citizen on Prospect Street. The servant who answered his ring at the front door looked down her nose at him and said, "All deliveries is made at the rear." Without protest, he carried the basket around to the kitchen door and handed it in to the cook.

That evening, Clare returned to the house – as a guest at a fairly formal dinner party. As she was about to serve him a plate of soup, the domestic who had spurned him at the door suddenly recognized him, dropped the soup on the floor, and fled in total confusion.

Epidermal Inscription

An autograph collector I am not. I have never asked anyone for his signature – except once.

President Gerald Ford came to New Haven on April 25, 1975 to speak at the Sesquicentennial celebration of the Law School. I had a special assignment for the occasion (and had to have advance security clearance): I was to bring the guest of honor and the University guest book together for official purposes. I was waiting with the book set up on a rostrum in an anteroom when President Brewster, by prearrangement, brought President Ford to me.

Sam Chauncey had supplied me with a desk set of two pens, one ball-point and one wet ink. Just before the zero hour, I tested the pens and found the wet ink running sluggishly. I hastily substituted my own fountain pen for Sam's in the socket of the desk set.

It was an impressive moment: the two Presidents and I alone together – except for nine Secret Service operatives and a dozen photographers. I offered President Ford a choice of the two pens. He picked my pen and grasped it. Being of a slightly larger diameter than Sam's, the pen stuck in the socket, and the entire assembly came out of the base, including a sort of universal ball on the end. The President looked at it for a moment and then said, "I'm not mechanically minded – I'm not sure how I'm supposed to write with this." I pulled the pen out of the socket and handed it to him, and he signed the book.

The by-play generated a discussion of writing instruments, and I took from my pocket a felt-tip pen. "I find this type most versatile," I said. "It will write on almost any surface." I handed the pen to the President. Pulling up my sleeve, I invited him to try it on my own arm, suggesting that he sign his name once more.

"Well, all right," he said. "You don't mind if I sign it informally – just 'Jerry Ford' – instead of my full name?"

"No, Mr. President," I replied. "Please feel free to write anything you wish."

This whole episode was spontaneous – well, almost: that morning, just to be prepared in case anyone should want to write on my arm, I had shaved a convenient spot. The writing that landed there remained legible only about four days. It had, however, been been photographically recorded for posterity. This is believed to be the only occasion upon which an incumbent President of the United States has inscribed his name on the skin of a private citizen while both of them were sober.

President Gerald Ford Autographs George Vaill's Arm

Some months later, I wrote President Ford to ask him whether there was any truth to the rumor ("if there is such a rumor") that that part of my arm which he had autographed was to be declared a national shrine or monument. He replied as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 4, 1976

Dear George:

Thank you so much for your recent note. I must confess I had not heard of the rumor concerning the activities involved in declaring your left arm as a national shrine or monument. Needless to say, I take a good deal of pride of authorship in this matter. However, after consulting with some experts in this area, I understand that approval is not likely to be forthcoming. You are nevertheless entitled to display your autographed extremity at any time as I am advised that this is guaranteed under the Constitutional right "to bare arms."

Seriously, it was a delight to hear from you and I send you my warmest good wishes.

Sincerely,

Jerry Ford

Mr. George D. Vaill
Associate Secretary
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

On the Shelf

Believing, and rightly so, that his effectiveness as an administrator was undiminished, Mr. Angell deeply resented having to retire at the age of 68, as the University's rules required. On several occasions when speaking as President Emeritus, he opened his remarks by saying: "As you know, I have been relieved of my duties because of obvious and offensive senility!"

Mission Aborted

Whitney Griswold used to tell of an incident in his Senior year: departing from his room to go to class one morning, he left his roommate working assiduously on a bottle of bathtub gin. When he returned after lunch, he found the roommate, impeccably dressed, even to Chesterfield and derby, lying unconscious on the floor and clutching a note which said, "Have gone to New York."

Whit used to say that all his actions in the Presidency were governed by an admonition which he had found on a jar of mayonnaise: "Keep cool but don't freeze."

Billy the Kid

Billy Phelps was a maverick from his early days. He was the first person to teach the novel as literature, and he was frequently under attack by his Faculty colleagues. My father was in his first class, in 1892, and I was in his last, in 1933.

In an 1897 photograph album compiled by Edward S. Harkness – containing pictures of members of the Faculty and of the graduating class – every teacher – except one – appears in whiskers (a most varied and scenic collection of hirsutage), and nearly every Senior is smooth-shaven. Billy, wishing to be identified with the students, is the only member of the Faculty without facial adornment.

Berdan and the Hoovers

John Berdan was a Fellow of Saybrook College. The Master, Elliott Dunlap Smith, frequently entertained persons of national prominence in the College, inviting the Fellows and students to meet them. One day when Herbert Hoover was there, I met John coming out of his Saybrook office. We talked for a few minutes, and as he headed for the street, I expressed surprise that he wasn't attending the Master's reception.

"Surely you're going in to meet Mr. Hoover," I said.

"Oh, yes, I guess I shall," said John, staring towards the Common Room.

Suddenly he stopped and called to me. "Which Hoover is it?"

"Herbert," I replied.

"Oh, hell," said John, "I thought it was going to be J. Edgar…" and he turned and resumed his retreat from the courtyard.

As John lay terminally ill, someone gave Mrs. Berdan a copy of a very nice article about him which had appeared in *The New York Times*. She read it to John, leaning down and speaking directly

into his ear. It was a very laudatory piece, but he gave no indication that he even heard her voice until she had finished. Then, opening one eye and speaking with great difficulty, he asked, "What did the *Tribune* say?"

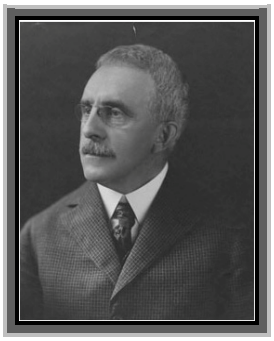
The Governor's Autograph

When the alumni gave a testimonial dinner for the newly inaugurated President Charles Seymour at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York in 1937, a number of prominent Eli types were seated on the platform. As each one was introduced by the toastmaster, he was supposed to rise, acknowledge the applause by bowing to the crowd, and sit down. When Wilbur L. Cross, the legendary "Uncle Toby" of the Graduate School and incumbent Governor of Connecticut, was introduced, he went straight to the rostrum and began to speak – which he continued doing, in spite of all efforts to cut him off, for more than a half-hour. He started out by saying, "As a member of the Faculty, I always wanted to attend the meeting of the Yale Corporation, and I finally discovered that the only way I could do it was to run for the governorship on the wet and slippery platform of the Democratic Party." It will be recalled that, after being retired by Yale, he served as Governor for eight years.

After he finally retired to private life, Wilbur Cross lived on Prospect Street and spent most of the day at the Graduate Club on Elm Street. Walking down, he would sometimes break his journey with a call at my office in what was then called Alumni Hall (now known as 451 College Street, or the Treasurer's Office). He would barge in, sit down in the chair beside my desk, drop his hat and cane on the floor, and ask, "What's new?" After I had told him what was new, he would pick up his hat and cane and go along.

One day, as he was leaving my office after a brief visit, a woman – a New Haven dowager – came fluttering into the office and gushed, "Oh, Governor Cross, I have been looking everywhere for you, and I just heard that you were in here. I want you to do me a favor: I am embroidering this pillow-case with the signatures of famous people. Would you be willing to sign your name on the fabric so that I may embroider it?"

Uncle Toby took the pillow-case over to my desk, pushed things back so that some of them fell off the edges, borrowed my pen, and carefully autographed the cloth. Finishing, he handed her the pillow-case, returned my pent to me, and settled back in my chair. She thanked him profusely and went out. He watched her as she hurried along the sidewalk, past one window and then past another. When she was almost out of sight, he turned to me and asked, "And who was that insufferable bitch?"



Wilbur L. Cross

Forgetful Alumnus

Late one September afternoon, some years ago, I went into Mory's for a rendezvous with a flagon of beer. The place was empty except for a few idle waiters and two male persons, a young one who appeared to be a Freshman and an older man whom (because he seemed to fit the part) we shall call the Uncle. He might have been about 25 years out of college.

In the relative silence of the place, it was impossible not to eavesdrop on the monologue which the Uncle was delivering: "This is good old Mory's," he was saying. "This is the real center of undergraduate life – the heart of Yale." He went on to point out his face in a group picture on the wall, initials he had carved in their table (that was why he had chosen to sit there), and other mementos of a happy youth.

The Freshman asked a few questions, and the Uncle drained his beer glass. Pretty soon he said, "We used to have a wonderful drink here – what was it called? – oh, yes, I remember – Green Cup! Finish your beer and we'll try it." He beckoned to a hovering attendant and said, "Waiter, please bring two Green Cups."

For those who do not know what a Green Cup is, let me say that it is a potentially lethal concoction of champagne and soda-water and a so-called "mysterious green mixture" – surrounding a large block of ice (its chief ingredient) served in a silver chalice which holds approximately a half-gallon. Designed for a group of eight or ten, it is customarily passed from hand to hand and lip to lip around the table while everybody sings. It is not allowed to touch the table until its contents (other than ice) have been consumed.

The waiter disappeared into the office, and in a few minutes, Charlie King, the Steward, emerged with one of the silver cups, empty, hidden behind his back. Bowing respectfully to the Uncle, he said, "Sir, the wiater tells me that you have ordered two Green Cups."

"That's right," said the Uncle. "It used to be one of my favorite drinks here when I was an undergraduate."

"I'm afraid, sir, you've forgotten what a Green Cup comes in," said Charlie, setting the chalice on the table.

"Oh, yes," said the Uncle. "I guess my memory is not too good. Make it one Green Cup."

I sat for about a half-hour watching the two manfully passing the cup back and forth. I couldn't stay to see the finish, but Charlie told me later that they had done a pretty good job. "It was an awful load for the kid," Charlie said, shaking his head.

Mory's c. 1914

A Useful Source of Revenue

From 1702 until 1871, the degree of Master of Arts was given to any holder of Yale's B. A., of three or more years' standing – only provided he "satisfied the Treasurer" by paying a stipulated fee.

Far-Flung Legislative Control

The degree conferred upon mainland Chinese students by Yale-in-China (now called Yale-China) between 1906 and 1949 were authorized by an act of the General Assembly of Connecticut (popularly known as the Legislature).

The Oldest Living?

In 1951, when Yale was preparing to celebrate its 250th birthday, the Corporation was deliberating on the selection of prominent educators to be given honorary degrees at a special convocation. One suggested candidate was reported to be 90 years of age, and someone raised the question of whether or not (in such advanced years) the man would be able to appear. After hearing the matter tossed back and forth for awhile, Bishop Sherrill is reported to have suggested that, since Yale was marking 250 years of life, they confer a degree upon someone who was also 250 years old.

This discussion reflected the stipulation that, in order to receive an honorary degree from Yale, the honorand has to appear in person. So far as the record showeth, there have been only two exceptions to this rule: Clarence Day and Cole Porter were anointed in private convocations in their New York apartments.

Hadley On the Air

President Hadley, while visiting with the Class of 1883 at their reunion in 1908, was congratulated by one man on the good ventilation in Woolsey Hall and by another on the excellence of his Baccalaureate Address. "One commends the cold air," said Mr. Hadley, "the other the hot air!"

Early Menu

At the first Commencement dinner of the Collegiate School (later called Yale College) held in Saybrook, Connecticut, on September 16, 1702, the menu included shellfish, venison, succotash, and a "boiled Indian pudding." (It was not easy to boil an Indian in those days.)

Archibald Who?

On the wall at the northeast corner of Berkeley College – on the east side, facing Calhoun – there is a bronze tablet bearing the inscription:

This is Blount Avenue
and was so named by
The Corporation of
Yale University after
Archibald Henry Blount
of Hereford England
in recognition of a
generous bequest
MCMXV

Thus is commemorated, by the naming of the walkway between Elm and Wall Streets, the most mysterious legacy ever bestowed upon Yale.

The story began in June of 1898, when Archibald Blount (pronounced Blunt), Lord of the Manor of Orleton in Herefordshire, England, initiated correspondence with the Treasurer of the University wioth reference to making Yale the principal beneficiary under his will, a copy of which was received here the next year.

The matter then lay dormant until 1906, when Mr. Blount reopened the negotiations with the suggestion that he might hand over his property during his lifetime in return for an annuity to be paid to him by Yale. (He was then 66 years old.) While this arrangement was under discussion, he died, on June 17, 1907. In a new will, dated 13 days before his death, Mr. Blount left the major part of his estate to "Yale University at New Haven Connecticut in the United States of America… to be applied in such manner as shall be best for the benefit thereof…"

After the payment of succession duties of $70,000 and legal expenses of $8,500 – and a "satisfactory settlement" with several heirs-at-law (about $43,500) – Yale received the residue, which ultimately amounted to $333,737.

It is not known whether the Lord of Orleton ever saw Yale or even visited this country, and no motive for the gift has ever been discovered. In an orgy of gratitude, the Corporation, in 1915, finally got around to acknowledging Mr. Blount's generosity by attaching his name to what had previously been known officially as University Avenue (and popularly as Grub Street).

Archibald Blount

The Banning of "Bright College Years"

Over the past 45 years, I have had the honor and privilege of leading the public singing of "Bright College Years" on more occasions than I could possibly count – at football games in the Bowl, reunion baseball games, alumni luncheons, class dinners, and other such occasions. Although fewer alumni seem to know the words today, the song continues to appeal to those who have not abandoned all manifestations of sentiment.

In his Senior year, Henry S. Durand, of the Class of 1881 (later a prominent physician) wrote the well-known lines in the form of a three-stanza poem which was soon set to music – the air of the German national anthem, "Die Wacht Am Rhein," composed by Carl Wilhelm. An immediate success, it was adopted as the sacred "alma mater" and sung at the conclusion of class dinners, reunions, athletic contests, and such gatherings.

The custom continued until the United States entered World War I against the German Empire, whereupon it was discarded, as were so many symbols and reminders of the enemy: sauerkraut was called "liberty cabbage," German measles became "liberty measles," and the laying of the music of German composers was greeted with public hostility.

In Paris during the war, William S. Innis, of the Class of 1914 (whose musical qualifications included membership in the Whiffenpoofs), set Durand's words to the tune of the "Marseillaise," and some groups (such as the alumni of Cleveland) adopted this version. Prizes were offered for a new tune – manuscripts to be sent to the Office of the Secretary of the University. But none of the resulting suggestions seemed to take the place of "The Watch on the Rhein," and it was restored to respectability and sung again about 1921, in spite of the continuing opposition of a good many alumni, some of whom refused to remove their hats when it was sung outdoors.

It is interesting to note that the use of the anthem was not suspended during World War II, since no one associated "Die Wacht Am Rhein" with Hitler and his Nazis.

During the upheavals in the early years of the present decade, when students made a special effort to avoid any manifestations of tradition, B.C.Y. almost became a casualty. Helping one group of Seniors plan their Class Day program, I pointed out that every such occasion invariably concluded with the singing of the sacred anthem. The committee went off to confer with fellow students, then returned with what they considered a generous compromise: they would condescend to sing B.C.Y. – but in the middle of the program instead of at the end.

On a number of occasions, I have had the gall to sing the second stanza as a solo while leading B.C.Y. For the benefit of any others who might like to add it to their repertoire, all three stanzas are reproduced here as they appear in an 1881 Class History.

Bright College Years

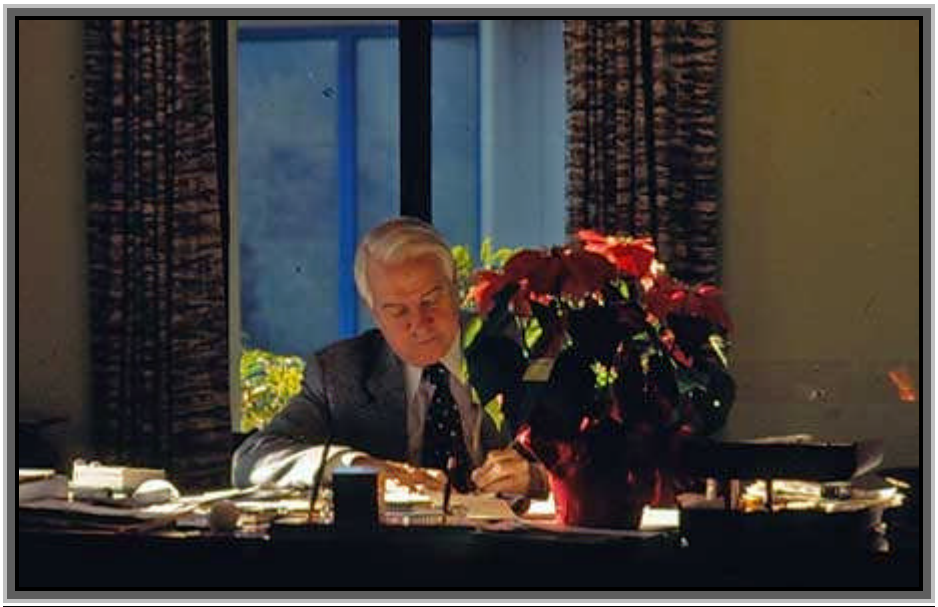
Bright College years, with pleasure rife,
The shortest, gladest years of life,
How swiftly are ye gliding by!
Oh, why doth time so quickly fly!
The seasons come, the seasons go,
The earth is green, or white with snow,
But time and change shall naught avail
To break the friendships formed at Yale.

We all must leave this college home,
About the stormy world to roam;
But though the mighty ocean's tide
Should us from dear old Yale divide,
As round the oak the ivy twines
The clinging tendrils of its vines,
So are our hearts close bound to Yale
By ties of love that ne'er shall fail.

In after life, should troubles rise
To cloud the blue of sunny skies,
How bright will seem, thro' memory's haze,
The happy, golden, bygone days!
Oh, let us strive that ever we
May let these words our watch-cry be,
Where'er upon life's sea we sail, -
"For God, for Country, and for Yale!"

Henry S. Durand, '81.

An Honorary Degree For Ben Holden



Ben Holden, Yale Secretary (1953 – 1971)

On Thursday, June 10, 1971, late in the afternoon, Kingman Brewster came down to my basement office in Woodbridge Hall and said that he had a plot in which he wanted me to conspire with him: at the Commencement Exercises on Monday, he planned to confer an honorary degree (Doctor of Humane Letters) upon Ben Holden, who had told the President (and a few close friends) of his intention to resign from the office of Secretary of the University to become President of

Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina. Kingman solicited my help in procuring me the proper academic hood and a diploma, which he wanted me to print in my own shop in Bethany. Above all, I was to share the secret with no one. He and I were to be the only ones to know about this degree until Sunday night, when he was going to ask Jock Whitney, Senior Fellow of the Corporation, to approve the action unilaterally on behalf of his colleagues.

First I went to the robbing room and stole an L. H. D. hood, which I hid in my office.

Then I went upstairs to the Secretary's Office to find one of the honorary degree diplomas to copy and use as a guide. To my horror, I discovered that they were all on Ben's desk, awaiting his signature, and he was sitting over them. Pretty soon, he was called to the outer office. I sneaked in his back door, extracted a diploma from the pile on his desk, ran downstairs and made a Xerox copy of it, and got it back on the desk just as he was coming back into the room. Riffling through the diplomas, I commented on the excellence of the calligrapher's work and then departed without having aroused Ben's suspicions.

Next I called the Printing Office of the University Press and asked them to send me ten or a dozen sheets of the paper on which the diplomas were printed, telling them only that I had "some special work" to do.

I spent Thursday evening in my printing-shop, setting the type for the first half of the diploma. On Friday night, I set the second half. On Saturday, I printed the diploma, striking off about ten copies before getting one which I considered satisfactory. On Sunday morning, just before Baccalaureate, I let myself into the President's Office and hid the diploma under some things on a shelf in his coat closet. As the Baccalaureate procession left Woodbridge Hall for Woolsey, I informed Kingman, by pre-arranged signal, that the document was ready for his signature.

On Monday morning, I went to the Old Campus and placed a box containing the hood under my chair on the platform. Since Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was to receive an honorary degree, the Campus was swarming with Secret Service operatives. Seeing me place the box under my chair, they demanded that it be opened and inspected (even though it was too flat to house anything but a very thin bomb).

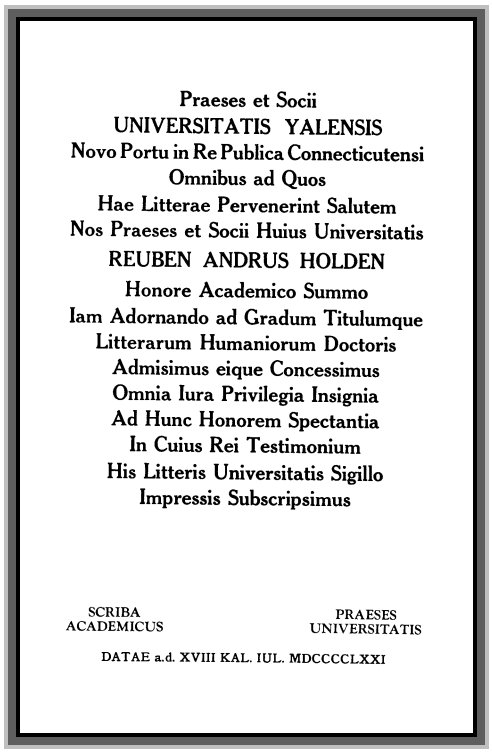
Yale was in the grip of a long strike, and the streets were filled with pickets. To avoid the possibility of unpleasant confrontations, the customary symbolic perambulation of Center Church was omitted, and the platform party robed in the Branford College Chapel and marched from there directly to the Campus.

Professor Edward Wight Bakke, as Senior Marshal, and I, as Procession Marshal, led the parade across High Street between double rows of policemen. En route to the platform, Kingman handed a note to Provost Charles H. Taylor, Jr., informing him of an irregularity in the established program – that the first honorary degree would be conferred upon Ben. Until that moment, only Kingman, Jock, and I had been privy to the secret.

As one of the acolytes who placed the hoods on the honorands, Corporation Marshal George W. Pierson had first to go to the left end of the platform to receive the proper hood from an attendant. Then he and the Senior Marshal approached the center of the stage from opposite ends, stood behind the honorand, and put on the hood as the degree was conferred. George and I had adjoining seats in the first row. Just before he was to rise and go to get the first hood, I handed him a note telling him that the first degree was to be a surprise – and that I had the hood in the box which I was then holding in my lap. George, apparently confused by this departure from normal procedure, stood at his chair until the Provost had announced Ben's degree, and then started toward the center, without the hood, which I had taken out of the box and tried to hand to him. I had to chase him almost all the way to stage-center to get him to take the hood. In the meantime, about 11,500 people were giving Ben a standing ovation, which served to conceal any minor hitches on the platform.

Kingman had signed the diploma after removing it from its hiding place on Sunday. I reminded Ben that the degree was invalid until it bore his signature as *Scriba Academicus*. He joked about invalidating it by a pocket veto but was ultimately persuaded, a week or so later, to sign it.

Unique among all diplomas, it is shown here in its unsigned form, reduced from its original size, nine inches by twelve and five-eighths. The traditional diploma is original with the long dimension on the horizontal.



Praeses et Socii
UNIVERSITATIS YALENSIS
Novo Portu in Re Publica Connecticutensi
Omnibus ad Quos
Hae Litterae Pervenerint Salutem
Nos Praeses et Socii Huius Universitatis
REUBEN ANDRUS HOLDEN
Honore Academico Summo
Iam Adornando ad Gradum Titulumque
Litterarum Humaniorum Doctoris
Admisimus eique Concessimus
Omnia Iura Privilegia Insignia
Ad Hunc Honorem Spectantia
In Cuius Rei Testimonium
His Litteris Universitatis Sigillo
Impressis Subscripsimus

SCRIBA ACADEMICUS — PRAESES UNIVERSITATIS

DATAE a.d. XVIII KAL. IUL. MDCCCCLXXI

A New Fence For the Old Campus

Several years ago, the Old Campus was the scene of a noteworthy restoration: a new fence from Battell Chapel to Bingham Hall. Conforming to traditional specifications, the fence is built of spruce rails and Western red cedar posts. A feature not found on previous Yale fences is a cap of sheet lead on each post – an additive designed to retard spoilage.

From the arliest days of the College, barriers of one sort or another have separated Yale from the outside world. Engravings made in 1745 and several subsequent illustrations showed a board fence along the College Street boundary. In 1833, the Corporation directed the Treasurer and College Inspector "to cause a suitable railing to be placed around the College yard." Photographs taken through the ensuing years appear to confirm reports that the fence at one time did, indeed, enclose the entire Campus. The "Old Yale Fence" of honored tradition and sentimental ballad, however, was limited to those sections adjacent to and meeting at the corner of Chapel and College Streets. This was the social and musical perch of Yale undergraduates for more than a half-century. Here they gathered to talk and smoke their pipes, and here they blended their voices in immortal harmonies. Each class had its own assigned section – and woe be unto the brash Freshman who had the temerity to plant his bottom on the sacred Chapel Street rails, even in the dead of night. A *Lit* writer in 1872 described the fence as "ancient, mutilated, and delapidated *(sic),* but rich in tender

associations." Students manifested their affection for it in a number of characteristic ways – by setting it afire, for example, "hundreds of times."

The announcement, in 1888, that a new recitation hall (Osborn) was to be constructed on the corner where the fence stood was greeted by a general outcry from students and alumni protesting the callous destruction of so precious and traditional a seat of learning. When it was discovered, however, that the Corporation's determination to ravish the ancient shrine was irrevocable, the souvenir-hunting students descended upon the fence and began tearing it to pieces. Some parts, carefully preserved, have survived. Whole sections, hidden away in senior society tombs and in private collections, rest today as mute reminders of a glorious past.

To compensate for the loss of the three-rail street-side fence, a two-rail substitute was set up inside the Campus, alongside a driveway which was laid out to encircle the interior buildings. Allowed long since to fall into disrepair and largely removed piece by piece over the years, this is the fence which has now been replaced by the new spruce and red cedar with the lead cap. It makes a handsome addition to the reforested Campus.

Osborn Hall (1888 – 1926)

<u>1701 – A Great Vintage Year</u>

For what it may be worth, you are hereby notified, probably for the first time, that Yale shares the birth year 1701 with Anders Celsius, the Swedish astronomer who gave his name to that Other Temperature Scale.

There is no basis for the claim, now being advanced along the banks of the Volga, that the OTS was devised by a Russian scientist named Mstislav Centrigradesky.

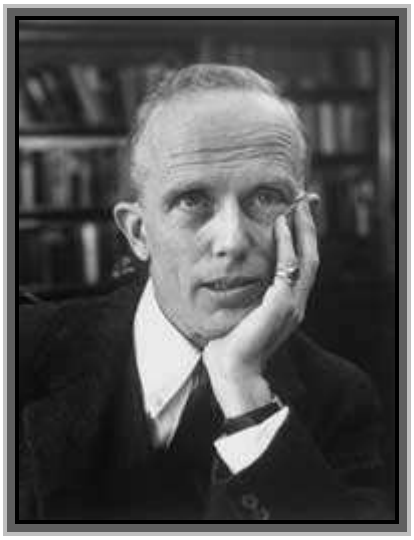
It was also in the year 1701 that Sir Isaac Newton promulgated a basic scale extending from zero at the freezing point of water to the temperature of the human body. But a German scientist came along and mixed salt with ice and lowered Newton's zero. This man's name was Fahrenheit.

You may not have realized how closely Yale was related to the thermometer.

Whit Griswold, Gamekeeper

Shortly after Whitney Griswold's death, Trubee Davison, longtime Fellow of the Corporation, wrote to Mary Griswold a letter which included the following story, reprinted here with her permission just as it appeared in the book of tributes called "Alfred Whitney Griswold, 1906-1963, In Memoriam," published by the Overbrook Press of Stamford (which I had the honor of editing):

> I was sitting next to him one night at Mory's for dinner, the evening before a Corporation meeting. He suddenly turned to me and said: "Trubee, would you like a rhinoceros?"
>
> I said: "Are you crazy?"
>
> "No," he said, "there's one in my garage."
>
> I said, "What in the world are you talking about?"
>
> "Well," he said, "there is an overflow from the Peabody Museum and they have put this beast in my garage and it's crowding my Ford and I want to relieve the congestion and thought that perhaps you would take it off my hands."
>
> I said: "Whit, there are many things in this world that I need but the one thing in the world that I do not need is a rhinoceros."
>
> The next morning at the Corporation meeting, everything was very formal. I was looking over the budget and noticed an appropriation for an expedition to Alaska, so I turned to Whit and said: "Mr. President, do you know what this expedition to Alaska is all about?"
>
> He said: "No, Mr. Davison, I do not. We will ask the Provost."
>
> The Provost didn't know the answer so Whit then said: "I'm sorry, Mr. Davison, nobody here seems to have the answer – we'll have to get it for you and give it to you later on. Have you any idea what this expedition might be about?"
>
> I said: "No, I don't know, but I think it might be about big bears."
>
> He said: "If it is, they sure as hell will end up in my garage."



A. Whitney Griswold

Towards a Sober Commencement

As an examination of the Corporation records of the 18th Century moves one towards the conclusion that the Yale undergraduate of that era seldom drew a sober breath, even though he was a mere teenager. In 1737 the Trustees noted that "on the Commencement Occasions there is a great Expense in spirituous distilled Liquors in College" – so they decreed that no brandy, rum, or other liquors were to be consumed by any student in his room "during the Week of Commencement." It became necessary to reinforce this prohibition in 1746.

In 1758, the Seniors were permitted to purchase "a Pipe of Wine" – provided that no student be required to pay a share if he chose not to imbibe. There were 43 boys in the graduating class, and there were 126 gallons of wine in a pipe. If divided equally, this provided about three gallons of wine for each student. What a Commencement!

In Memory of Me

Now that I have outrun the prime of life and am beginning to catch up with senility, I am happy in the knowledge that several memorials have already been established to help my more forgetful friends remember me after I have gone to the great Recycling Plant up yonder. Unfortunately most people never have the pleasure and satisfaction of seeing their own monuments – or even of knowing whether there will be any. The steps which I have taken to avert such a calamity may be helpful to others.

The Memorial Gate. During World War II, the Army Air Force was given the use of the Old Campus – buildings, grounds, and all except the Yale Station section of Wright Hall, the Freshman Office and Board of Admissions quarters in Welch Hall, and Dwight Memorial Chapel.

To provide access to the Chapel and still preserve the military security of the Campus, a fence of heavy mesh wire was erected to form a corridor from High Street, alongside the building and then around the corner to the doors. Where this corridor breached the permanent iron fence on the High Street side, right next to the building, a section about eight feet wide was removed from that fence. After the War, when peacetime pursuits reclaimed the grounds, the wire barrier was exterminated, and the section of iron fence was replaced and bolted into its old position.

Following the formal Commencement Exercises on the Old Campus, the graduating Seniors receive their diplomas from the Masters at smaller, more intimate ceremonies in their individual Colleges. As soon as the candidates have been marched off the Campus, most of the 11,500 guests – parents, relatives, and friends – begin a mad dash towards the College courtyards, fearful of being late for the next event.

The shortest way from the Campus to six of the Colleges is through the gateway leading to High Street, opposite the main gate of Branford. With more than half the crowd trying to get through that gate almost at the same time, there was, in the early years of outdoor Commencements, a frightful crush, and a number of people were injured. As Marshal of the Old Campus, I witnessed this stampede several times and tried to persuade the authorities to provide additional egress by removing the section of iron fence next to Dwight Hall. I finally prevailed, and the fence was removed and replaced three times on each Commencement weekend – unbolted, carried aside by four men, carried back, and rebolted into position.

My next campaign was to have the section hung on hinges and secured by a chain and padlock, so that one man could do what the incredible four-man ballet had previously accomplished. In recognition of the ultimate success of my efforts, it was unofficially named The George D. Vaill

Memorial Gate. As such, it continues to perform its useful, life-saving function on every Commencement Day.

The Memorial Eye-Bolts. The great, billowing canopy over the Commencement platform is held up by poles which are guyed with ropes secured to trees and other stable objects. Three of these ropes are hitched to buildings – two to Wright Hall and one to Durfee. For a number of years, they were tied to heavy timbers which were placed across open windows inside nearby rooms. This made an unsightly lash-up, and I suggested that heavy eye-bolts (about four inches in diameter) be attached to the outside walls of Wright and Durfee for the accommodation of the guy ropes. Reluctant to risk the danger that such bolts might pull the stones right out of the walls – this disaster was seriously predicted by a few timid souls – my superiors dragged their feet for two years before trying my suggestion. I am happy to report that The George D. Vaill Memorial Eye-Bolts have been working perfectly ever since they were installed, and even the skeptics have had to admit that the new system is better than the old timber hitch.

The Memorial Peep-Holes. I have assisted with the arrangements and acted as an usher at a great many memorial services in Dwight Chapel. My customary station is in the rear, at the main entrance. On account of the cold in winter and the campus noises at the other times of the year, it is desirable to keep the big doors shut after the service has begun. Invariably there are some people who arrive late. They don't know how to open and close the doors quietly, and their arrival (not infrequently in the middle of a prayer) is disturbing to those in the rear seats.

It occurred to me some years ago that, if we could know when someone was about to enter, we could open the door from the inside and then guide its closing so as to muffle its rattles and clankings. At my suggestion, a one-inch hole was bored through each massive door and covered with a watch-crystal window. Now, through the first five or ten minutes of the service, and usher can stand there and, keeping an alert eye on the steps by way of The George D. Vaill Memorial Peep-Holes, open the door when late-comers arrive. Those who had hoped to sneak in unnoticed always appear surprised when the door opens, and they realize that they have been mysteriously discovered.

The Memorial Light. The steps and alleyway between the Elizabethan Club and 451 College Street used to provide a precarious passage to those who used that route to the parking lot after dark. After I mentioned this one day to the University Safety Officer, he immediately had a light installed over the steps and christened it The George D. Vaill Memorial Light. The tribute is most flattering, especially since, even in times of energy shortage, it frequently burns all day as well as after sundown.

The Memorial Photographers' Stands. As Procession Marshal at Commencement, I have, for some years been the first marcher down the center aisle which leads to the platform. This occasion, in common with weddings and other functions nowadays, takes on the appearance of having been sponsored by Kodak and Polaroid: almost everyone in the audience totes a camera and wants to get the same shot from the same angle at the same time. Despite the valiant efforts of the Campus Police and the ushers, my progress down the aisle is invariably hampered by backward-walking photographers taking countless snaps of the oncoming procession.

For a few happy years, this difficulty was mitigated by the erection, at my suggestion, of three platforms about two feet in elevation and accommodating perhaps 20 people each at the intersection of the aisles just inside Phelps Archway. These structures, equipped with restraining

railings, took care of about 60 of the most zealous nuisances, kept them out of the aisles, and gave them a better vantage point for their compulsive shuttering.

Alas, some of our most useful monuments have been relegated to ephemerailty by inflation. Thus, The George D. Vaill Memorial Photographers' Stands have, for several years, been omitted for budgetary reasons. Of course, being put up and torn down each year, they lacked the sense of perdurability which characterizes my other shrines.

The Ultimate Humiliation

I have been on the Yale scene, in one capacity or another, for nearly a half-century. Now, just as I was beginning to think that I had made some kind of impression, the whole thing seems to have been a waste of time. A piece of mail, addressed to me merely in care of Yale University, has been returned to the sender, rubber-stamped by Yale Station – "Addressee Unknown at Yale."

Transcriber's Postscript

George Vaill's tongue-in-cheek list of personal memorials omits an important one that he could not have known about, because it was installed posthumously. An explanation is in order.

Each year Yale's Woolsey Hall is used for two important academic functions: Freshman Assembly and Baccalaureate services. After the Hall has been filled with students and their family and friends, the academic procession, consisting of Yale's President, Provost, Secretary, the Dean of Yale College, the Masters of the various Colleges and other academics – all resplendently robed in their colorful gowns – assembles in Memorial Hall, just outside of Woolsey Hall's main doors. When George was at Yale, he would stand at the back of the west aisle, just inside the doors to Woolsey Hall, and wave a white handkerchief to indicate that the dignitaries were ready to process.

From my vantage point as page-turner in the organ console pit, the waving of the white handkerchief signaled me to turn and tell the University Organist, seated on the bench of the Newberry Memorial Organ, to begin the processional music. For the past thirty-five years or more, the opening heraldic measures of Charles Krigbaum's *Processional for the President* cause the audience to rise to its feet as the procession marches down the aisle and up onto the platform at the front of the Hall.

When George retired from Yale in 1976, someone had to assume his duties as Procession Marshal. Unfortunately, his replacement lacked the necessary physical stature to be readily seen waving the handkerchief above the heads of the crowd. A solution had to be found.

Within a year or two, electricians installed what I like to call The George D. Vaill Memorial Signal Lamp in the console pit, its bright red glow visible only to the two occupants of the console pit, and operated by an inconspicuous switch near the main doors to the Hall. Each year, as the lamp flashes the cue to begin the processional music, I am reminded of George's effective, but distinctly low-tech, waving handkerchief and the swift passage of the decades that I've been privileged to serve this great institution.

It is my hope that by transcribing George's book I have helped in even a miniscule way to keep his name alive and to preserve some of the more obscure and humorous stories that he loved to tell.

Joseph F. Dzeda